

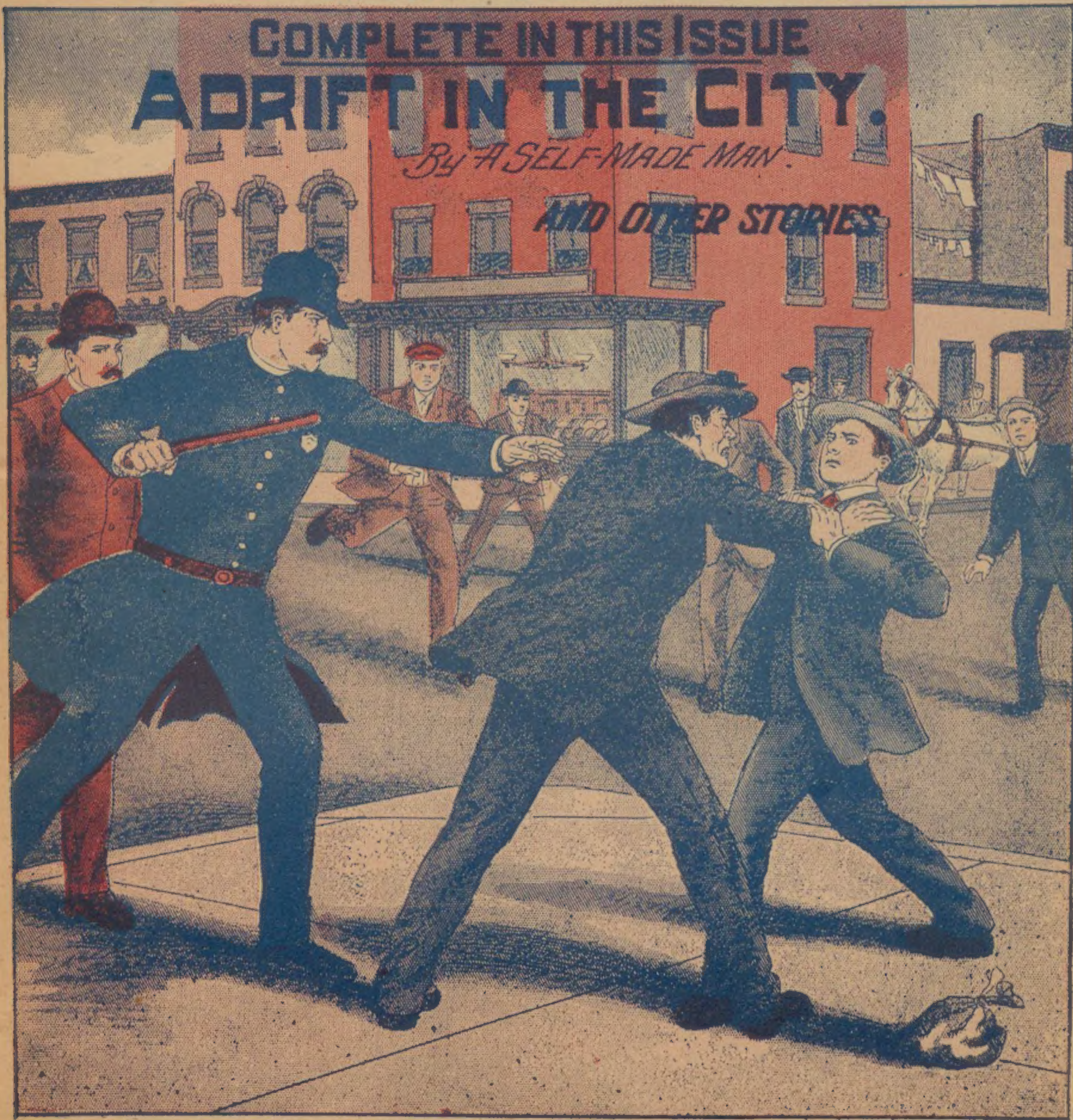
FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE
ADRIFT IN THE CITY.

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

AND OTHER STORIES



"Give me dat bag!" cried the rascal, seizing the surprised Hal by the shoulder and shaking him roughly. The bag of quartz samples dropped from the lad's hand and struck the stones. An officer standing near reached for the ruffian.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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Adrift in the City

OR, THE FATE OF A WAIF

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.—A Stranger in New York.

"Here we are in New York at last," said Mr. John Hooker, a sleek-looking, well-dressed man of medium stature, to his companion, a bright-faced boy of eighteen years, as the express train from Chicago, aboard which they were, rolled into the Grand Central station one afternoon. "Follow me."

The speaker grabbed a small handbag and started for the door of the Pullman car. The boy did likewise and followed at his heels. Mr. Hooker, by profession a lawyer, was perfectly familiar with New York City, as he had lived there many years since, and besides visited the place at least once a year. The boy, whom we introduce to the reader as Harry Hadley, generally addressed by his friends as Hal, was, on the contrary, a perfect stranger to the metropolis of the East. Indeed, the only city he was at all familiar with was San Francisco, and he had not seen a whole lot of that. His earliest, as well as his later, recollections, were associated with the small town of Santa Clara, not quite fifty miles south of San Francisco, on the line of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Here he had always lived with a family in moderate circumstances as a permanent boarder, for, as far as he knew, he was an orphan. Just why all his expenses were paid by Mr. Hooker he did not know, nor could he find out what interest the lawyer had in him. The people with whom he lived, who were very kind to him, either did not know themselves or were under instructions not to enlighten him. His education was not neglected, for he had been early put at a private school. When sufficiently advanced he was transferred to the preparatory department of the Jesuit College of Santa Clara, one of the best educational establishments in the State. He attended the school as a day scholar, but stood on the same footing as the regular boarders.

He was well long in the academic course, having shown great proficiency in his studies, when one day, a week before the opening of this story, Mr. Hooker appeared in Santa Clara, abruptly terminated his connection with the college, paid all his obligations, and told Hal, in his concise way, to pack up his things, for he was going to take him to New York. Hal knew from experience that it would be useless for him to try and get any explanation from Mr. Hooker other than

that gentleman volunteered himself, so he packed up, with a rather heavy heart, for he had grown attached to the family he lived with, as well as his surroundings, so familiar to him, and next day he bade adieu to the only home he had ever known.

Hal was somewhat bewildered with the noise and bustle of Forty-second street when he and Mr. Hooker stepped out from one of the many entrances of the station. A row of cabmen clamored for their patronage. This was before the day of taxi-cabs. The lawyer picked one out of the bunch, and he piloted the way to his vehicle.

"Trunk, sir?" asked the man, as Mr. Hooker told Hal to get in.

"No. The transfer company will deliver our baggage," replied the lawyer, who then directed the jehu to drive to a certain moderate-priced hotel further downtown.

Hal caught a fleeting look of imposing buildings and sidewalks crowded with pedestrians as the cab threaded its way among other vehicles bound up and down the street. They finally landed at the hotel and the lawyer registered for them both, asking for two rooms, adjoining or on the same corridor. Then they went downstairs and took seats in the vestibule to wait until dinner time.

Mr. Hooker bought a couple of evening papers and handed one to Hal. These sufficed to pass the time till the lawyer told the boy to follow him into the dining-room. After the meal they sat down again in the rotunda, already populated with many guests and others.

"You'd better go to bed early, as you must be tired after your trip across the continent," said Mr. Hooker. "I am going out, as I have important business to attend to, and I probably won't return till late."

"I will," replied the boy, "though I suppose I can sit here till I get sleepy?"

"Certainly. Sit here as long as you choose, or walk around if you prefer, only don't leave the hotel, for you might lose yourself on the street."

Half an hour later Mr. Hooker bade him good-by and left the hotel. Hal accompanied him to the entrance and stood there a while looking up and down the street, and watching what was going on. He concluded to venture as far as the corner, which was occupied by a liquor saloon,

the door and windows of which were lighted up with electric lights. A policeman was standing just outside the door, amusing himself with his night-stick, which was suspended by a stout cord from his wrist. He was a man of about fifty, with several light blue stripes, indicative of length of service on the force, encircling his sleeve, and his face looked so cheerful that Hal ventured to accost him and ask him a few questions about the city.

"Stranger in the city, eh?" said the officer, regarding Hal's fresh young face with some interest.

"Yes, sir."

"Where from—up-State?"

"No. I've just arrived from California."

"Fine country out there, I've heard," said the policeman. "I thought of going there once."

"Yes. I've lived there all my life."

"You don't say! In San Francisco?"

"No. In a country town about fifty miles from San Francisco."

"Come East with your people, I suppose?"

"No; I have no parents. I came with a gentleman who has charge of me."

"Your guardian, eh?"

"I don't know whether he is or not."

The officer seemed to regard that as a strange answer, and looked hard at the boy.

"Expect to go back soon, I suppose?" he said.

"I think not, for he took me out of college right in the midst of the term. I'm afraid we shall remain here."

"Afraid, eh? You would rather go back, then?"

"Well, sir, everything is so new and strange to me here. I have no friends outside of Santa Clara——"

"That's the town you hail from?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you were born there, of course——"

"I was not born there. In fact I don't know where I was born, nor who my parents were," admitted Hal, in a burst of confidence.

"Is that so?" said the officer, slowly, looking still more curiously at him. "Doesn't the gentleman you say you're with know anything about the matter?"

"I am sure he must, but he has never told me anything about myself. I asked him once or twice, but he shut me up so short that I haven't had the courage to approach him on the subject again."

"You appear to be well educated. This gentleman paid your college and other expenses, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Somebody must have left him money for that purpose unless you're a relative of his."

"I don't think I'm any relative."

"What's his business?"

"He's a lawyer."

"Then it's probable he's your guardian. Where are you stopping?"

"At the Globe Hotel up the block."

"Well, as you're a stranger, you'd better not go far from here by yourself. You might get lost."

"Don't you worry, nunkey, I'll take charge of him," said a sporty-looking young man of nineteen, who had come out of the saloon a few min-

utes before, and had been standing behind them listening to their conversation. "I'll make him wise to the town, and give him a good time."

The officer grabbed the speaker by the arm, while Hal regarded him with not a little curiosity.

"So I've found you here again, have I?" cried the cop, angrily. "Been wasting your time in that saloon. Oh, you depraved young reprobate! I'm ashamed to know that you're my sister's only son."

"Are you talking to me, nunkey, or to this boy?" replied the policeman's nephew with easy cheerfulness.

"I tell you what, nephew, you're a shame and disgrace to your family," cried the officer, more angrily, still holding on to his relative.

"Oh, I say, don't keep hold of my arm that way. What will the passers-by think? That you've nabbed a crook."

"You're not much better than one. In fact, I've heard——"

"What have you heard?" laughed the young man, as his uncle let go of him.

"No matter; but I don't like the reports that have reached me of your goings on."

"Then don't believe them, nunkey. What a nuisance uncles are!" and the young man grinned at Hal. "They are never satisfied."

"Satisfied!" roared the officer. "Satisfied with such a——"

"I say, nunkey, you're getting red in the gills. If you don't mind you may break a blood vessel, and then you'd be laid up."

"Why don't you try to earn an honest living?"

"What! me work? I'm surprised at you. Was not I born to be a gentleman? My mother always said that she was sure I would become a real gentleman some day, and so I'm doing my best to make her words good."

"Your mother, I regret to say, spoiled you," said the officer, fumbling in his pockets for his handkerchief to wipe his face, but failing to find it. "Where in the dickens is my handkerchief?"

"Is this it, nunkey?" asked the young man, holding it up.

"Where did you find it?" asked the policeman, suspiciously, as he grabbed it.

The sporty young man laughed, dug his relative in the side, and then deftly abstracted a cigar from his pocket, which he coolly proceeded to light, winking at Hal, as if it was a good joke. His uncle looked at him a moment, then put his hand to his pocket and discovered his loss.

"Confound you, Nobby, you stole that from me," he cried, making a grab at it.

"Me steal it?" cried the young fellow, stepping back out of his reach. "Why, I bought that in the saloon. It's your profession that makes you think everybody is a thief."

"I know better. If I did my duty I'd run you into the station-house. What a disgrace it is for an honest policeman to have for a nephew one of the biggest young rascals in New York."

"A nice reputation you're giving me before this boy. What will he think of me? I was going to offer to show him the town, seeing that he's a stranger."

"Do you suppose I'd let you take him in tow? Well, I guess not. He's a respectable lad. I wish to heaven you were like him."

"Oh, I say, that ain't fair. I'll treat him white," protested Nobby.

"You won't get the chance. Sheer off now. If you did the proper thing you'd go home."

"What! at this hour? A fellow has got to amuse himself while he's young. I'm going up to Lobster Square to take a look in at the Criterion Billiard Rooms. Ta, ta, nunkey, till I see you again. You've deprived that young fellow of a bang-up evening. I'd have shown him the elephant. Is this your handkerchief?" he added, as he backed away. "Funny I should get hold of it again. Here, catch it."

The sporty youth playfully tossed him the article and walked off with the air of a person perfectly satisfied with himself.

Hal looked after him, little thinking under what circumstances he would next see Master Nobby, whose other name was Notman.

"That's my nephew, my dead sister's only son, and he's the worry of my life," said the officer with a sigh. "He boards with me, at my expense," he went on. "I've threatened to turn him out of the house for not getting down to honest labor, but somehow I haven't the heart to do it. I've threatened, too, to have him committed as a vagrant, but—ah, life has its trials, young man. You'll have yours one of these days when you get older and some against the world. Somehow or another I've taken a fancy to you. It isn't your face, though that's honest and square, for there are faces as honest looking as yours in the Rogues' Gallery on Mulberry street. Indeed, some of the worst scoundrels of the lot look as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouth, which goes to show that you can't judge a book by its cover. What is your name, my lad?"

"Hal Hadley."

"My name is Simpson—William Simpson. I've been on the force thirty years, or will be in a month or two, and then I'll be entitled to another blue tape on my coat sleeve. I'm attached to the — Precinct station-house at present. I'll have to move on now. I'll be glad to see you again some time if you stay in the city. Call around to the station and ask for me. If I'm not on reserve duty, or not on my beat, you can ask for my address and then call at my house. Good-night."

"Good-night, Mr. Simpson. Glad to have met you," said Hal.

He strolled back to the hotel, got his room key and went to bed.

CHAPTER II.—Hal Meets Nobby Notman Again.

After breakfast next morning Mr. Hooker devoted an hour to the morning paper, while Hal amused himself by watching the panorama of the street. When the clock noted the hour of ten the lawyer said he was going downtown, and he told Hal to come with him. They boarded a Broadway car and were carried down the main artery of the city. When the car reached Canal street Mr. Hooker signaled the conductor and they alighted. The lawyer turned his steps to the east, and in course of a short time they arrived at the Bowery, where Hal caught his first view of the elevated railroad. Crossing to the east side of the noted thoroughfare they turned

north. After going a few steps Mr. Hooker stopped and said:

"Wait for me here. I have business with a man in the saloon on the corner. I will return presently."

Without waiting for any reply from his companion the lawyer hastily passed into the grog-shop through the swinging doors and disappeared. Hal, standing near the curb, amused himself watching the sights in the street. Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, and then the boy began to think it was about time that Mr. Hooker rejoined him. The lawyer, however, did not appear, even after the lapse of half an hour.

By this time Hal had grown impatient over his lengthened stay. Approaching the doors he glanced inside. There were two or three customers at the bar drinking, but no sign of Mr. Hooker.

"Where can he have gone?" the boy asked himself.

He waited ten minutes longer, but the lawyer failed to show up. Hal began to grow nervous.

He could not understand why Mr. Hooker remained away so long. Finally he decided to go into the place and inquire. The bar was clear for the moment, and Hal stepped up to the man in a white jacket who stood washing some glasses behind it.

"What'll yer have?" asked the bar-keeper, grabbing a beer glass as if he expected Hal to say beer.

"Can you tell me where Mr. Hooker is?" the boy asked him.

"Mister Who?" asked the man, staring at him.

"Mr. Hooker."

"Don't know him."

"He came in here three-quarters of an hour ago to see a man——"

"If he did he went out again."

"He couldn't have done so, for I've been waiting for him outside."

"Well, you see there ain't nobody here, don't you?"

"Perhaps he went into a room to talk with the man."

"There ain't no room he could have gone into but the wash-room at the back. Take a look and see if he's there," and the bar-keeper waved his arm toward a swinging door at the rear of the saloon. Hal hesitated and looked at the door in a doubtful kind of way. At that moment a sporty-looking chap entered the saloon.

"Hello, Barney," he said to the bar-keeper; "has Swift been here——"

Then he broke off as his eyes rested on Hal. He stared at the boy as if he couldn't believe his eyes.

"Why, it's never you, is it?" he exclaimed.

Hal immediately recognized him.

"You're Mr. Simpson's nephew," he said in some surprise at the unexpected encounter.

"That's who I am, and you're the boy from California. You seem to have found your way to the Bowery fast enough if you are a stranger in town. Seeing as my respected nunkey didn't introduce us last night we'll have to introduce ourselves. What's your name? Mine is Nobby Notman."

Hal was not particularly anxious to make the acquaintance of the sporty young man after the

reputation his uncle had given him, but there seemed to be no way of evading it, so he told his name.

"Well, Hadley, what brings you down here?" asked Nobby. "Seeing the sights and stepped in for a drink? Have another on me."

"Thank you, but I don't drink," replied Hal, drawing back.

"Don't drink and you're in a saloon," ejaculated Nobby, apparently astonished.

"I came in to look for the gentleman who brought me here."

"Who was the gent? He doesn't seem to be here."

"I can't understand where he's gone. He entered this saloon nearly an hour ago, and I've been waiting on the sidewalk for him to come out. Finally I thought I'd step in and see what was keeping him. But he isn't here, and I can't imagine where he has gone. I guess I'd better return to the spot where he left me, for he'll be looking for me."

"Well, wait a minute and I'll be with you."

Nobby stepped up to the bar, made some inquiry of the man behind it and, receiving a negative answer, he followed Hal outside.

"Who is the gent you're waiting for?" asked Nobby. "The man you're traveling with?"

"Yes."

"And he went into that saloon an hour ago and left you here waiting for him?"

"Yes."

"That's rather curious. It wouldn't take him more than a couple of minutes to get a drink."

"He didn't go in there to drink, but to see a man, replied Hal.

Nobby grinned.

"That's the way they put it sometimes."

"Put what?" asked Hal, looking puzzled.

"That's an old excuse. When a fellow takes his gal, or his old woman, to the show, and he wants to get a drink between the acts, he tells her gilbets that he's going out to see a man."

"Mr. Hooker didn't need to offer any excuse to me if he wanted to take a drink."

"His name is Hooker, eh?"

Hal nodded.

"Kind of strange that he should have you out here on the Bowery when he knows you're a stranger in town," said Nobby.

"Is this the Bowery we're on?" asked Hal, with some interest.

"That's what it is. That cross street is Canal."

"I heard a good deal about the Bowery while I was in Santa Clara, and have seen it mentioned in story books. It's considered a tough street."

"Oh, no, it's reformed. It used to be tough a good while ago. Still, it's pretty gay nights down in this direction. How long are you going to stay around this corner?"

"Till Mr. Hooker returns."

"Maybe he's forgotten all about you."

"How could he forget me?"

"I couldn't tell you, but it's funny he should leave you standing here so long unless he intended to shake you."

"Shake me? You mean go off and leave me here? I'm sure he wouldn't do such a thing as that. He must have gone upstairs in the building

to see the man he mentioned, and then has been detained."

"Did you ask the bar-keeper about him?"

"Yes. He couldn't give me any information about him."

"What kind of looking man is he?"

Hal described the lawyer's appearance.

"Wait here, and I'll buzz the bar-keeper about him myself, said Nobby, starting off, and Hal saw him enter the saloon.

"It must be considerably over an hour now since Mr. Hooker left me here," muttered Hal, making a motion to look at his watch.

To his consternation he discovered that his watch had disappeared. The chain was dangling from his vest.

"Good gracious!" he cried, "I've been robbed."

His suspicions immediately connected Nobby with the deed. He remembered his expertness the evening before in taking his uncle's handkerchief as well as the cigar from the officer's pockets. That, with the scaley reputation his relative had given him, left little doubt in Hal's mind that Nobby Notman was the party who had relieved him of his timepiece. Hal was made to think he had been treated in such a mean way by the young sport, who, he was now satisfied, was training for a crook. He didn't intend that Nobby should get away with his property if he could prevent him doing so. He rushed over to the door of the saloon. As he was about to enter he happened to glance down Canal street and saw the sport coming out of the side door. He dashed after him at once.

"Look here, Notman, I thought you were coming back to tell me what you learned about Mr. Hooker from the barkeeper," said Hal, laying a hand on his arm.

Nobby stopped and looked a bit confused. But only for a moment, for he was a lad of nerve and assurance.

"The bar-keeper told me he had gone down the street here a bit, and I was going to find him and tell him you were getting tired waiting for him," replied Nobby, glibly.

Hal felt that he was deliberately lying, and so took no stock in his words.

"Well, before you go please hand me back my watch," he said.

"Your what?"

"My watch. You took it out of my pocket just before you left me."

"I did?" cried Nobby, with an injured look.

"Yes, you did," replied Hal, firmly.

"You must be dreaming."

"No, I'm not dreaming. Hand it over if you want to avoid trouble."

"I haven't got your watch. Somebody else must have swiped it while you were looking around like a countryman."

"Nobody but you were near enough to me to touch it. I'm on to you, Nobby Notman. I saw how light-fingered you were with your uncle last evening, and that's evidence enough for me to know what that you have my watch."

Nobby saw that Hal more than suspected him of the theft, and as he had the watch in his pocket he began to figure on how he could shake the young stranger. He might have returned it, alleging that he had pinched it just as a joke, but he happened to be hard up and needed the money he could raise on the ticker at one of the

many pawn shops in the neighborhood. As he knew Hal was strange to the city, he thought he could give him the shake without much trouble, particularly as he himself was well acquainted with that neighborhood.

"There's your friend Hooker now," he said suddenly, pointing back toward the corner.

Taken off his guard, Hal turned and looked. Nobby took immediate advantage of the chance to dive in among the pedestrians and hurry down the street. As soon as Hal realized he had been tricked he looked around for the young pick-pocket. At first he couldn't see him anywhere, but starting in the direction he knew he had taken, he finally spied him entering a doorway.

"Thinks he'll throw me off his tracks," breathed the boy from California, grimly; "but he'll find out he's mistaken." He noted the door, and when he came to it, entered the building.

Before him was a narrow staircase, while a hallway extended to a yard in the rear.

"I guess he's gone into the yard," thought Hal. "At any rate, I'll look there."

He rushed to a door, which stood partly open, and caught a fleeting glimpse of a pair of legs disappearing over the fence.

"That's the rascal, I'll bet a dollar," said Hal, starting for the fence.

There were cracks and knot-holes a-plenty, and Hal first peeked through into the adjoining yard. There he saw Nobby Notman leisurely entering the back door of the building to which the yard belonged. Hal lost no time in scaling the fence and dropping into the next yard. He ran to the door and opened it. He looked into a long hall, and caught sight of the policeman's nephew approaching the door that opened on the next street. He seemed to be in no hurry, feeling confident that he had thrown Hal off the scent. The California lad made a dash after him.

Hearing Hal's steps, Nobby looked around. With a gasp of astonishment he recognized his pursuer. He rushed for the door to escape, but just as he was going through Hal reached for him and yanked him back into the hallway.

"No, you don't, Notman. Turn over my watch or I'll knock the daylights out of you, and then march you to the station-house," said Hal, in a tone that showed he meant business.

Although Nobby was two years older than Hal, he was no match for the athletic young collegian in strength. He recognized the fact after one futile struggle to throw Hal off.

"Here's your watch," he said, sullenly. "Now let me go."

"What did you steal it for?" asked Hal, as he took it.

"Because I'm hard up."

"You should have asked me for a small loan."

"And I'd have got it, wouldn't I?" replied Nobby, sarcastically.

"Yes, you would have got it, though I dare say you don't deserve it. You ought to go to work and earn an honest living."

"I ought to do a whole lot of things, but they're too rich for my blood. I'm a gentleman and a sport, not a laborer."

"A gentleman and a sport. And you steal when you're broke."

"What's that to you?" growled Nobby. "You've got your watch, you needn't hand me out any advice."

"You're worrying the life out of your good uncle by your conduct."

"I suppose he confided his sorrow to you," sneered Nobby.

"Well, he said enough to make me feel sorry for you."

Nobby uttered a hard laugh.

"I don't look for your sympathy, Hal. You've got the best of me, so we're quits."

"Very well. Here's half a dollar to help you out."

Nobby looked at the money and then at Hal.

"Are you going to give me that after I frisked your ticker?" he said.

"Yes. I don't hold any hard feelings against you. Take it."

"You're all right, Hadley," said Nobby, accepting the money. "I know I'm a hard case, but there's worse than me. I never go back on a pal or a friend. You've done me a favor and I sha'n't forget it. If I can ever do you a good turn to square it you can count on me doing it. If you take my advice, and it's well meant, you won't wait around here any longer for your friend. If he hasn't shook you he's done the next thing to it. You'd better go back to the hotel where you're stopping and wait there till he shows up. I'll show you over to the Broadway cars so you won't get lost. You can trust me," he added, as he noticed the doubtful look on Hal's face. "If you had a thousand dollars in your pocket book I wouldn't pinch it now."

"All right," replied Hal; "but I guess I can find Broadway and the cars by returning along Canal street the way Mr. Hooker brought me."

"I'll go as far as the corner with you to see that you start in the right direction," said Nobby.

Hal accepted his guidance to the corner of Canal, and then started off alone.

CHAPTER III.—Adrift in the City.

Hal reached Broadway all right, boarded a car going north, and as he knew the location of the hotel, which was a short distance from Broadway, he reached it all right. He bought a magazine and sat down to read it, believing that Mr. Hooker would turn up before lunch time. The lawyer, however, didn't turn up, and Hal went in to lunch alone. After the meal he stepped up to the desk and asked for the key of his room.

"What number?" asked the clerk.

"Forty-seven," replied Hal.

The clerk reached for it, but did not take it out of the box.

"I guess you've made a mistake," he said. "What's your name, and when did you register?"

"Mr. Hooker and I came late yesterday afternoon. He registered my name."

"Oh, I see. Mr. Hooker has given up the rooms, and left word that when you came here you were to get your baggage. Your trunk is standing yonder, and your grip is in the cloak-room."

Hal gasped at this piece of unexpected information.

"I don't quite understand," he said. "Mr. Hooker is paying my expenses."

"That's all right. He's paid the bill up to and including lunch. He left himself about half-past

ten, and took his trunk with him. He said you'd call later for yours and take it away."

"He said that?" faltered Hal, fairly paralyzed by the situation.

"What's the matter? Don't you understand the arrangements?"

"No. Do you know where Mr. Hooker went?"

"Haven't the least idea. He didn't say where he was going."

"Then you don't know whether he intended to leave the city or not?"

"I do not. He went away in a cab, taking his trunk with him."

"And he left no letter for me?"

"Nothing of that kind. The only directions he left was what I just told you. We were to give you your baggage when you called."

Hal was certainly staggered by the aspects of the case. Taken in connection with his morning's experience at the corner of the Bowery and Canal street, it looked as if the lawyer had deliberately deserted him—thrown him out on the world into the streets of a strange city. Why had he done this outrageous act? If, after bringing him up from childhood, and in a way that left no room for complaint on Hal's part, to throw him over with such brutal suddenness, and without a single word of explanation, was certainly it. The shock was so unexpected and heavy and most inexplicable. The boy could not understand. Hal stood like one dazed at the hotel desk.

"I guess I'm up against it hard," he muttered half aloud.

"What did you say?" asked the clerk.

"Nothing," replied the boy, too proud to confess his trouble to the clerk. "May—may I leave my things here a little while," he said after a few minutes' thought. "I am not ready to take them away yet."

"Certainly," replied the clerk. "They can stay here a reasonable time. If you don't want to take your trunk this afternoon, it can remain till tomorrow, or for a day or two for that matter. As you owe us nothing, you can call for and receive your property any time it suits you."

"Thank you," replied Hal, walking slowly toward the street entrance.

Reaching the sidewalk the boy stopped to consider what he should do.

"Evidently Mr. Hooker has washed his hands of me at last," he thought. "Why did he take the trouble and go to the expense of bringing me East, only to throw me over? That strikes me as a strange feature of his conduct. And yet perhaps it is better so, though I am thrown on my own resources in a strange place, for I should have felt deeply mortified had I been deserted in this shameful way among those who were my friends, and who supposed I must be pretty well fixed. Mr. Hooker might have given me some money to pay my way until I got on my feet. I have never had to work to support myself, and consequently I hardly know what to turn my hand to. That I've got to hustle for a living now is certain, for the few dollars I have in my clothes won't last me long. I must look around for a cheap lodging to take my trunk to, and the sooner I do that the better."

He walked up to the newsdealer outside the hotel.

"I want to get a furnished room. Will you tell me the best paper to consult for a such thing?" he said.

"Sure," said the dealer. "All the morning papers contain advts. of rooms to let. This paper is about the best of the lot for you to look at," and he pulled a certain morning paper out of a pile under his stand and handed it to Hal.

"How much is it?"

"A cent."

Hal took the paper and, re-entering the hotel, took a seat and started to look the paper over. There were several columns of advts. under the heading "Rooms to Let," and as they were all more or less alike, Hal was greatly puzzled to make a selection. The chief difficulty was that he had no idea of the streets, particularly with reference to the letters "E" and "W."

"I suppose that means east and west," he thought. "Now where does east and west begin? I'll ask the newsman, though I hate to admit my ignorance. However, he'll understand that I'm a stranger in town."

So he went outside and asked the newsdealer.

"Fifth avenue is the dividing line," said the man. "East is on one side of it and west on the other. Whereabouts do you want to take a room?"

"I don't know. Which side are the cheapest rooms?"

"On the lower East Side."

"Where is that?"

"Around Third avenue and east of the Bowery."

"The Bowery. I know where that is. I was at the corner of Canal street and the Bowery this morning. I shouldn't think that was a very nice place to live."

"Oh, there are better places. I wouldn't advise you to go downtown. If you want a cheap room, say for \$1.50, you can't do better than start east along the next street. Walk over to Third avenue. You'll know it by the elevated railroad. You'll see small signs, pieces of paper, on about every other house announcing that a furnished room can be had within. Sample a few of the places along the block and take the one that suits you best. That's a better way than picking advts. out of the paper, as you are a stranger and would have trouble in hunting up the places."

Hal agreed with him and decided to try the plan. It struck him that it would be a great advantage to him to secure a room near the elevated road, as that would be a kind of general guide to him. So he walked to the corner and started east along the cross street. While Hal was on his way we will transport the reader ahead of him to a somewhat shabby, three-story brick house on that street just east of Third avenue. The front door was reached by a short flight of steps that terminated at a stoop. The landlady, a vinegary-looking woman, of uncertain age, and still more uncertain disposition, occupied the first floor and the basement. The two upper floors she rented out to two different tenants.

The top floor was the cheapest and was occupied by a delicate little woman and her daughter, a very pretty girl of about seventeen years. Although they were evidently in greatly reduced

circumstances, there was an air of refinement about both that showed they had seen better days. The floor consisted of four rooms, one of which, a hall room, was unoccupied, though meagerly furnished. At the moment we introduce them to the reader's attention the girl was seated by the front window embroidering an infant's sack, while several duplicates already finished lay folded up in a paper on the table in front of her. Her mother had just come in from a back room and was standing near her.

"What are you thinking about, Jessie, dear?" said the woman, noticing her daughter's pre-occupied air.

"Oh, nothing, mother—nothing," answered the girl, gently.

"Ah, you say that in order that you may not grieve me; but I can guess well what are your thoughts. You are thinking of what is ahead of us. The last of our resources are exhausted. We are——"

"You forget these sacks, mother. This is the last of the dozen. When I deliver them I will be paid, and then——"

"I know, but we are behind in our rent, and the sum you will get will not be enough to satisfy the debt we owe Mrs. Bunker."

"Our landlady will not, I dare say, refuse a little longer credit," said the girl, with forced cheerfulness.

Mrs. Adams did not reply. She had not told her daughter that that very morning the landlady had threatened to turn them out on the street if their rent was not squared up. She looked sadly out of the window, for the prospect of their lives had never seemed quite so dark before. What was to become of them if they were forced to leave their home? Where could they go? A furnished room somewhere was their only resource, for the landlady would certainly hold on to their few possessions to satisfy her claim.

"What are you thinking about, mother?" asked Jessie.

"I was wondering—oh, Jessie! There are moments, when looking into your dear, patient face, I am almost resolved to——"

"To what, mother?"

"To sell that one precious memento that I have clung to all these years—the diamond locket containing your baby brother's picture," said the woman with a sob.

"No, no, mother. Anything but that," cried the girl, earnestly. "We cannot part with that even to buy food. Some day, maybe, if brother be alive, it may be the means of reuniting him to us."

"Alas! How can we hope so? It is sixteen years since he was stolen from me to gratify the spite of a revengeful man. The picture was taken but a month or two before that terrible event happened. He was then a little over two years old, my dear, my precious first-born!"

"And you could do nothing to punish the cruel man who thus afflicted you?"

"Nothing. I had no proof, save the assurance of my heart, that he was guilty of the act. He was rich and powerful, your father was at sea, and you were not a year old."

And he thus revenged himself on you because——"

"I choose to follow the dictates of my heart and marry another man."

"Was not that your privilege, mother?"

"True; but he was madly infatuated with me. He offered me wealth, position, everything a woman could reasonably wish for, but—from the knowledge I had obtained of his character I felt he would be dear at any price, and so—I refused him."

"You did right, mother."

"He refused to accept my answer as final until he learned I had married your father. Then one day he forced himself into my presence when I was alone, and, after abusing me for throwing him over, and calling me a fool for sacrificing all the splendors he had offered me, he swore that he would get square with me some day in a way that would wring my heart. When my darling boy disappeared in a mysterious way, his words and threats, which I had forgotten, all came back to me, and I felt that George Buchanan had kept his vow. I applied to the police, and they did all they could to find my little Harry, but the quest was in vain, and from that day to this——"

The speaker bowed her head on the hand which rested on the window, and wept like one who could not be comforted. The girl cried, too, for though her stolen brother was but a memory to her, his baby face was always before her eyes, and he was as real to her as though she had seen him in the flesh. At that moment the door was unceremoniously opened and the landlady appeared. She did not look pleasant, but that was not at all singular, as she always seemed afflicted with a standing grouch.

"Now, then, Mrs. Adams, I want to know when you mean to pay me?" she said, sharply, folding her arms and taking the center of the floor like a tragic actress on the stage. "I have waited till I'm tired. I have my own rent to pay, ma'am, and the agent never gives me any time."

"I am sorry that we are so much behind, Mrs. Bunker, but circumstances have been against us. As soon as my daughter has delivered the work she has in hand, which will be finished in an hour or two, we will have a little money, and then I will pay you something on account," said Mrs. Adams, gently.

"Something on account!" snapped the landlady. "That's the way it always is. You pay me two dollars and then run four in debt."

"It is not our fault that we cannot settle in full, but our misfortune."

"And must I suffer because you two are unfortunate? Why don't you go out to work yourself and make something? No, of course you wouldn't do that. You're too much of a lady," she sneered. "Well, I have to work. I always have worked, and I always expect to work, so I want my rights. I want you to pay all you owe me not later than tomorrow, or get out, so I can rent my floor to a tenant who can pay me promptly."

"I'm afraid it will be impossible for us to pay you all by tomorrow. I will give you five of the six dollars my daughter will bring home."

"What's five dollars when you owe me more than fifteen? No, ma'am; I must have the seventeen odd you owe me tomorrow. Do you under-

stand? Tomorrow or I will have your sticks put on the sidewalk in three days by the marshal."

"That will not bring you the money any sooner, and we will not know where to go. Will you not have a little pity on us? We mean to pay you, and we will if you only grant us time."

"Pity, indeed! The trouble with me is I'm too tender-hearted. Another woman wouldn't have allowed you to get so far in debt for your rooms. My husband says I am a fool, and I dare say he is right. Well, I'll give you till Saturday, for it would cost me \$2 to have you dispossessed, and that would make twenty dollars I should lose. If you rent your room perhaps you will be able to pay me more than the five dollars on account."

"We have had no applicants for it."

"There is a young man outside now who wants a cheap room, and I brought him up to see you about it. Maybe he'll take it."

"Where is he?" asked Mrs. Adams, eagerly.

"Here, ma'am," said a cheerful voice, and Hal walked into the room with his hat in his hand.

CHAPTER IV.—Hal Rents a Furnished Room.

Mother and daughter looked at the good-looking young stranger with a favorable eye, for he was well dressed and gentlemanly. The thought occurred to each that he would make an ideal roomer for them if they were so fortunate as to secure him.

"Well, ma'am, I'll leave you for the present, but you may expect me in this evening for something on account," said Mrs. Bunker, turning around and making her exit with her head in the air, as though conscious of her own importance.

"You wish to look at the room we have to rent," said Mrs. Adams to Hal. "I am not sure that it will suit you, for it is not very well furnished; but what it lacks in that respect we will try and make up in other ways."

"I will look at it, ma'am," replied Hal, much impressed by the refined air of the woman as well as the gentle beauty of her daughter. "I am not over particular as to the room, but I would like to get with nice people, as I am a stranger in the city."

"A stranger!" murmured Mrs. Adams, strangely taken by the face of the boy.

"Yes, ma'am. I only arrived from California yesterday afternoon."

"Indeed. That is a long distance from here."

"About 3,500 miles."

"I suppose you have no friends in the city?"

"Not a soul that I know."

The girl cast a sympathetic look at the boy, whose face seemed to attract her in an unusual way. It almost seemed as if it was familiar to her, just as if she had met him before, but, of course, she had not if he was just from the Pacific Coast.

"We will try to make it pleasant for you if you take the room," said Mrs. Adams, in a motherly way. "We can almost understand how you must feel."

"I am sure you will, ma'am."

"Will you follow me?" said Jessie's mother.

She took Hal outside and showed him the room. The sun happened to be shining in at the

window, and gave the poorly furnished room a cheerful look. Ordinarily Hal would have turned it down at the first glance, but there was something he wanted more than any room, however well fixed up, could supply, and that was to know that he was with an honest family. He knew intuitively that Mrs. Adams and her daughter filled the bill in that particular, and that his belongings would be safe on their floor. He was not surprised to note the straightened circumstances of the little household, for, standing on the landing, he had overheard the conversation between the landlady and the woman, and his sympathy was enlisted in the latter's behalf.

He felt that he would like to do something to help the impoverished tenants of the floor, and it struck him that if he rented the room he would be benefiting them. Besides he felt a strange leaning toward this woman and daughter whom he had never seen before. He ascribed it to the fact that they acted and looked like persons accustomed to something much better than their present circumstances. The girl's face resembled the pictured Madonna he had seen so often in the old mission church attached to the college of Santa Clara. It was good, it was pure, it was angelic. Some the girl's beauty was also reflected in the mother's countenance, too. Ah! If he only had such a mother—such a sister—how he would work to give them every comfort!

"I'll take the room, ma'am," he said, "and I will have my trunk sent right over from the hotel. What is the rent?"

"I think I ought to get one dollar and a half a week," said Mrs. Adams.

"All right, ma'am. I'll pay you two weeks' rent in advance," he said, taking out his little roll.

"That is very good of you. We could hardly ask you for more than one week."

"I suppose so, ma'am, but I thought, pardon me, that you might need it."

"We do, Heaven knows we do," exclaimed the woman, with tears in her eyes.

"I thought so, for I accidentally overheard the landlady strike you for overdue rent. Now, ma'am, I am bound to say I like you. I don't know why, but your face attracts me. I have no mother nor father; not a friend on this side of the continent. Furthermore, I have just been abruptly severed from all the ties I have known since my earliest recollection and cast upon my own resources in a strange city. You will pardon me, therefore, for saying that somehow I feel as if I could regard you as a friend while I stay here, and that would be a great satisfaction to me."

Mrs. Adams looked at him with a curious yearning in her eyes, as she listened to his words. This bright boy was just about the age her son was if alive. She felt in her heart that this lad was lonesome, and her mother's heart went out to him. Ah, how happy would she be if her own dear boy were only with her. That was not to be, however, but here was a young stranger who needed a sympathetic friend, and she could not be deaf to the appeal conveyed by his words.

"We, my daughter and myself, will try and make your stay here as pleasant as we can," she said. "You need not confine yourself to this room when you are here. You must make yourself at home in our little sitting-room, just as if

you were one of us, as, indeed, we will so regard you. But you have not told me your name. My name is Adams, and my daughter's name is Jessie."

"My name is Harry Hadley."

"Your name is Harry?" almost gasped Mrs. Adams. "That was my——"

She was going to say son, but the word appeared to choke her, while the tears filled her eyes. There was a momentary silence, and then the woman pulled herself together.

"Come, I will introduce you to my daughter, and will get you a key to the door downstairs. You will take the key of your room with you, as we have another."

Hal followed Mrs. Adams inside and was presented to Jessie, who favored him with a winning smile that caused him to take to her at once. He paid Mrs. Adams the three dollars, and remarked that if wasn't for the fact that he was short himself, he would just as soon pay her for a month if it would help her out. Mrs. Adams thanked him in a grateful voice, while Jessie thanked him with her eyes. After a short conversation Hal said he would return to the hotel and arrange to have his trunk sent over. He took down the number of the house, the landlady's name, and then wished Mrs. Adams and Jessie good-by till he saw them again.

"He's a fine boy," said Mrs. Adams to her daughter when they were alone again. "We are indeed fortunate to secure such a lodger."

"Yes, mother. How kind and generous to offer to help us in our need! We must do all we can to make things pleasant for him," said the girl.

"Of course, dear. We will try and make the place a home for him. He told me that he hasn't a single acquaintance in this part of the country. He also said something about being abruptly cut off from all his familiar associations and thrown upon his own resources. From that I judge that some misfortune has compelled him to come East to make his living. He is well educated and refined, and there seems to be no doubt but he comes from a good family."

"He certainly appears to be an exceptionally nice boy."

"And to think his name is Harry. He is just what I have often pictured my dear, lost boy if—if he is alive. My heart inclined toward this young stranger for that reason. Oh, Jessie, Jessie, where is our Harry this moment? What has been his fate? If I knew he had died as a little child I should feel resigned to his loss, looking forward to meet his angel form in heaven; but to feel that he might have been brought up among persons of uncertain character, who cared little how his career shaped itself—that reflection sometimes almost drives me frantic. No one but a mother can understand my feelings."

"There, there, mother, don't agitate yourself any more with the painful memories of the past. Somehow or another I feel as if better times are in store for us. I have felt restless and peculiar all day; but since the appearance of our young roomer my heart has grown calm. Something whispers to me that his coming is an omen of good fortune, and that things will improve with us from this time on."

"I trust so, my daughter. Surely it is time that Fate dealt a little less hardly with us. Since your father died we have been steadily going down hill."

"And we have nearly reached the bottom; but, mother, you know the darkest hour is always just before the dawn. The clouds that hover around us at this moment seem to have a silver lining."

"Heaven grant that you are right. For myself I care little; but you, Jessie, you have seen so little of the bright side of life, I pray that the clouds will scatter, that the sun may begin to shine on your budding womanhood."

"Ah, mother, you are always thinking of me."

"And who else have I to think of, and care for, but you, my only child?"

"True. There, I have finished the sack. I will now get ready to carry my work to the manufacturer that I may bring you the money we need so badly," said the girl, folding up the last of the garments she had been employed on a whole week.

After making a neat bundle of her work she retired to the inner room to dress herself for the street, while her mother resumed her domestic concerns.

CHAPTER V.—Hal Secures a Situation.

Hal hired an expressman to take his trunk to his new quarters, and then spent the rest of the afternoon getting acquainted with the neighborhood in which he was to live and its immediate surroundings. He got his supper at a moderate-priced restaurant, and just as it was growing dark he entered Mrs. Bunker's house, using the latch-key Mrs. Adams furnished him with, and proceeded to take possession of his humble rooms. Jessie heard him come in and told her mother.

"You had better knock at his door in a little while and invite him into the sitting-room," she said.

Her mother agreed with her, and after the lapse of half an hour she knocked on Hal's door, and when he opened it she asked him if he would not like to pass an hour or so with herself and Jessie. Hal accepted the invitation, and during the two hours that he passed with mother and daughter he confirmed the good impression he had already made on them. He told them about his college days in Santa Clara; about the family with whom he had lived as long as he could remember, and about the relations heretofore existing between him and Lawyer Hooker. Then he told them how Mr. Hooker had abruptly taken him away from his familiar surroundings and brought him East, without offering any explanation of his purpose. And finally he confessed how the lawyer had that morning abandoned him without the slightest regard for his feelings or apparently his future.

"It is a mystery to me why he should go to the expense of bringing me all the way to this city if his object from the first was to throw me out on the world. He might have done that in San Francisco, where I was acquainted with the lay of the land. If the funds presumed left by my parents for my support were exhausted he

might have told me so, and then I would understand that I had no further claim upon his care and attention; but to treat me the way he has done is, in my opinion, downright brutality," said Hal. "However, I don't intend to lose any sleep over the matter. I shall look for work at once, and the best of the unusual circumstances in which I have been placed. It will come a bit hard at first, but I'll get used to it; and in the long run I mean to make a success of myself."

Mrs. Adams and her daughter listened with great interest to their young roomer's story, and they were not a little astonished at the strange and unexplained conduct of the legal gentleman who for so many years had looked after the boy's welfare only to throw him out on the world at last as some people treat a horse or dog that has survived its days of usefulness.

The only point that Hal withheld was the fact that he did not know who his parents were. After spending a couple of hours in the sitting-room, Hal excused himself on the plea that he was tired, and returned to his room. He was up early next morning and out of the house. On his way to breakfast he bought a morning paper, and while waiting to be served at the restaurant he looked over the advertisements under the heading of "Help Wanted—Males." He cut out a number that looked promising to him, and noting down the streets and numbers on a piece of paper, he showed it to the cashier when he stepped up to pay his check, and made sundry inquiries concerning their location.

All of the places were downtown, and the restaurant man directed him how to reach them. The first on his list was a John street house that dealt, among other things, in copper ore. To reach this place he was told to take a South Ferry train on the Third Avenue Elevated and go to the Fulton street station on Pearl street. As John was the next street below Fulton, he would have no difficulty in finding it, and then all he had to do was to look for the number in the advertisement. Having decided to make his first application at that house, Hal boarded a train, and was soon speeding downtown.

He found the place, and also several applicants for the position already on hand waiting the coming of the boss. That gentleman soon appeared and entered his office. The boys and young men who had come after the job were shown into the office in turn, and when Hal was admitted the gentleman seemed to be struck by his appearance and manners. After asking his name the proprietor inquired where he lived. Hal told him.

"I presume you are well acquainted with the lower part of the city?"

Hal had to confess that he was not, though he did not say he was an utter stranger lest that would kill his chances.

"You look smart and intelligent, so I dare say you will easily pick up what you lack," said the gentleman, who was disposed to engage him.

"Yes, sir," replied Hal, respectfully.

"Most of your time will be passed in the store, but when you have an errand to do outside I shall want it executed with dispatch."

Hal promised to do his best.

"Well, take that chair and I will see the rest of the applicants. If none of them suits me better

than you, I will give you the position," said the gentleman.

Although unfamiliar with the city, the proprietor, unaware of his utter lack in that respect, was disposed to regard his other advantages of sufficient importance to warrant taking him on trial, so Hal got the job and was set at work. He was to begin at \$6 a week, with the promise of advancement as he deserved it. He was not called upon to go out that morning, and at half-past twelve was told he could take half an hour for lunch.

About half-past two he was given a bag full of quartz samples and told to take them to a certain store on Broadway near the post office. He started out of the store without the least idea where Broadway lay, or where the post office was. He turned in the right direction, and then stopped a boy and asked him for the information he wanted.

"Don't you know where Broadway is?" said the lad, staring at him.

"No, I'm a stranger in the city," replied Hal.

"Go straight ahead and you'll walk into it. You'll know it by the street cars running up and down."

"And which direction is the post office?"

"Turn to your right and you'll see it facing you. It's at the junction of Broadway and Park Row."

"Thank you," said Hal, and he started on, confident now of reaching his destination.

A walk of two blocks brought Hal to Broadway, which he seemed to recognize by the street cars and the crowds of pedestrians that filled the sidewalk. He turned to the right as directed and soon saw the big post office building. He knew it at once by the pictures he had seen of it. He was not going to the post office, but to a business house on one of the side streets leading down to the North River. Which street was the one he was bound for he did not know, so he entered a cigar store and inquired.

"What's that? Barclay street you're looking for?" said the clerk. "Right across the way."

Hal thanked him and walked out. Broadway was crowded with vehicles of every kind, and when the boy reached the edge of the curb the prospect of crossing to the other side without being run down was not particularly good. While Hal was waiting for an opening, a roughly-dressed, unshaven fellow, who had come from Ann street, noticed the boy's nervous manner.

He would not have been taken for a stranger at that moment, with the bag in his hand, and the man did not size him up as such. His attention had been attracted by the bag, which looked as if it might contain money. The temptation to try and get away with it amid the Broadway rush occurred to the fellow, who, being on his last legs, was in a mood to attempt any desperate expedient that promised a profit.

"Give me dat bag!" cried the rascal, seizing the surprised Hal by the shoulder, and shaking him roughly.

The bag of quartz samples dropped from the lad's hand and struck the stones. An officer standing near reached for the ruffian. The would-be thief reached down, snatched the bag and darted away into Ann street, scattering several passers-by from his path. Hal started after him like a shot, and the policeman followed.

Ann street is a very narrow thoroughfare, and the block between Broadway and Nassau street is always crowded with pedestrians and the push-carts of street fakers anchored alongside of the narrow sidewalks during the busy hours of the day. The rascal darted through the mob and then took to the street, dodging the vehicles that were passing along at a slow pace. Hal, however, kept him in sight, and his activity prevented the thief from losing him in the confusion.

The chase was a lively and tangled one. The rascal did not look back, knowing very well that he was pursued. He devoted all his energies to getting away. Half way down the street, on the north side, was a narrow lane, known as theatre alley, which only runs one block up to Beekman street. This was filled with an overflow of push-carts, the owners of which could not find room in Ann street to peddle their wares. The thief rushed into this alley, as the most available avenue of escape. He also had another reason for doing so.

He had a pal who was operating that day as a street merchant. Darting by him he dropped the bag under his cart, calling his attention to it at the same time, and then continuing his flight. His pal understood, but was foxy enough not to notice the bag in any way just then. Hal, being close behind the thief, saw how he disposed of his booty. He stopped at the wagon, stooped and recovered the bag of samples.

"Hey, what yer doin'?" demanded the push-cart chap.

"Taking possession of my property," replied Hal.

"Your property! I like dat. Yer picked dat from under me wagon. Drop it."

"The man who just ran by here stole it from me and I saw him throw it under your wagon," explained the boy.

"Aw, tell dat to de marines. Yer better drop it or I'll——"

Just then the policeman came running up and Hal halted him.

"I've got my property," he said.

The officer saw the thief nearing the corner of Beekman, with every chance of making his escape, so he gave up the pursuit.

"Give me your name and address," he said to Hal. "I am liable to nab that chap yet, for I'll know him if I see him around here again."

Hal gave his name, and told him who he was working for, and then walked up to Beekman street, and from thence to Park Row, facing the upper end of the post office, with the officer.

He explained that he was a stranger in New York, and had just got a job in John street.

"I'm going to No. —— Barclay street. I believe the street is on the other side of Broadway, facing the post office."

"Yes," said the policeman. "Cross over here, walk around the end of the post office, and then cross Broadway. You will walk into Barclay street."

Hal, delighted to think that he had not lost his bag of quartz samples, followed directions and reached his destination all right. He took a receipt for the bag, returned to Broadway, and had no great trouble in finding his way back to the store.

CHAPTER VI.—The Stolen Pocketbook.

Hal was sent out twice more that afternoon, but by using his tongue as well as his eyes, he found the places he was sent to, and made a careful note of the streets as he came and went, just as he had done on his first errand, and thus got acquainted with the neighborhood around the store.

"It won't take me long to get the hang of the business section down here," he told himself, complacently. "How lucky I have been to get a situation right away, before I had exhausted my funds, and how fortunate to find a nice family to live with!"

The store closed at half-past five, and Hal decided that it would be to his interest to walk around some and learn a few more streets. This he did till it began to grow dark, when he took an elevated train for uptown. He knew the station he had to get out at, so he couldn't lose the bearings of his lodgings. He didn't go there, however, till he had eaten his supper at the same restaurant where he had taken his breakfast. The cashier, who was the proprietor, remembered his face, and the fact that he was looking for a job.

"Well, did you catch on anywhere?" he asked the boy.

"I did. At the first place I struck. The John street address you told me the way to reach."

"You're lucky. I have known people to hustle around for weeks without getting work."

"I have done pretty well for a stranger, don't you think?"

"You bet you have; but then you look neat and gentlemanly, and that goes a long way in most places."

Hal asked about the lay of the streets in that neighborhood and learned that those running north and south were called avenues, while the cross streets went by numbers, with E. or W. attached to them, according to which side of Fifth avenue they ran. The restaurant man wrote down for his guidance the names of all the avenues in their order from the East to the North rivers, and then advised him to purchase a street map at a stationer's, so that he could familiarize himself with the business section downtown where he was employed. Hal lost no time in getting a small folding pocket map of Manhattan island, and took it to his room. Before going into it he knocked at the sitting-room door. Jessie opened it and invited him in.

"I'll come in for a few minutes," he said; "but I have to devote my evenings to studying a street map I bought. I wanted to tell you and your mother that I have been fortunate today in securing a position in a good store on John street."

"I am very glad to hear it," said Jessie, smilingly. "Mother will be, too."

"I am very grateful to you both for taking so much interest in me."

"Not at all. We like you, and why should we not be delighted to hear that you are getting on so nicely?"

In a few minutes Mrs. Adams came in from the kitchen, and when she heard that their roomer had secured a position she offered her congratulations. After remaining half an hour Hal went to his room and began the study of his map, with the result that when he went to bed

he knew more about the streets of the city than many boys born and brought up in New York. He carried the map downtown with him in order to refresh his memory when he was at fault, and during the next two days, which ended his first week in the city, he found no difficulty in executing his errands with promptness and dispatch. Hal was glad that Sunday had come so that he would have a day to himself to explore the city. He slept rather late, and was locking his door, preparatory to going to breakfast, when Mrs. Adams appeared and wished him good-morning.

"We should be very glad if you take tea with us this evening," she said. "It would be a change from the restaurant."

"Thank you, Mrs. Adams. I will accept your invitation with pleasure. You are very kind to think of me."

"You forget you have acted very kindly toward us, Mr. Hadley."

"Not at all. I merely paid you two weeks' room rent in advance."

"But it was a great help to us. It tided us over a crisis."

"I am very glad to hear it, Mrs. Adams. Now that I have a position, and can see my way clear, I shall be glad to loan you \$5 if it will be any help to you."

"Thank you, but it is too much to ask of you."

"I can spare it, and you needn't worry about paying me back in a hurry."

Hal pulled out a V and insisted on her taking it. She finally did so reluctantly. Hal then went to breakfast. He spent the day as he had proposed, passing a part of it in Central Park. At six o'clock he returned to his lodgings. Jessie heard his footsteps, went to the door and invited him into the sitting-room. In the course of their conversation she referred to the money Hal had loaned her mother, and expressed her own gratitude to him. By that time tea was ready, and Hal was invited into the kitchen, which answered also for a dining-room. Mrs. Adams apologized for their meager accommodations, and Hal assured her that was all right. The meal was not elaborate, as the reader will judge, consisting of tea, cold meat, buttered toast, some jelly and cheap cake. Hal, however, enjoyed it better than a restaurant meal, and the conversation served to make it pass off all the pleasanter.

The rest of the evening he passed in the sitting-room, and he was more than ever impressed by the gentle beauty and refinement of Jessie, and the motherly friendliness of Mrs. Adams. Two weeks passed by and Hal got along famously at the store. The proprietor congratulated himself on securing such a nice, careful and industrious boy, and voluntarily raised him another dollar to encourage him. Everybody connected with the store liked him, and consequently he found things very pleasant there. At his lodgings he was now regarded almost as a son and a brother by Mrs. Adams and her daughter, who were never tired of talking about him between themselves. On the third Saturday evening of his sojourn in New York it occurred to him that he would like to meet Policeman Simpson, and tell him how he was getting on. He wondered how Nobby Notman was getting on, and how long it would be before he was hailed before some magistrate for the exercise of his light finger in-

dustry. He decided that the best way to find Officer Simpson would be to inquire at the precinct station he was connected with.

He had no great trouble in finding the station-house, but there he learned that Policeman Simpson had been transferred to an East Side station further downtown, and that he had in consequence changed his residence. He could not find out the officer's home address, but he was told the number of the precinct station-house, and advised to apply there for the information. He decided not to go there that evening, but possibly the next afternoon. He walked over to Broadway and strolled along that brilliantly lighted thoroughfare. Suddenly he heard a cry of "Stop thief!" and a commotion behind him. Turning around, in common with others, he saw a sporty-looking young fellow running toward him, followed by several persons. He recognized the young man as Nobby Notman.

"He's up against it at last," thought Hal, a bit regretfully, thinking of Nobby's worthy uncle, the policeman, who took such an interest in his disreputable nephew.

Had the presumed thief been anybody but Nobby, Hal would have tried to head him off in the interests of justice, but he didn't have the heart to bring about the young sport's downfall. As Nobby was dodging about to avoid the passers-by he spied Hal. To the boy's astonishment he rushed up to him and grabbed him by the arm.

"Hello, Hadley," he said, in a hurried tone. "Meet me at the corner of Third avenue and Twenty-sixth street, will you?"

Then he gave Hal's jacket a tug and was off like a shot down a side street. The crowd, which had increased, was now close at Nobby's heels, but he ran like a deer, and as there was no policeman in that vicinity at the moment, he outstripped his pursuers. The excitement soon died out on Broadway, and Hal, wondering at Nobby's nerve in asking him to meet him at the designated corner, continued his stroll. In the course of two hours Hal returned his room and sat down to read a magazine before he retired. Feeling sleepy at length, he started to remove his jacket. Then it was he noticed a bulky object in his pocket. He pulled it out and was surprised to find that it was a pocketbook.

"How in thunder did that get into my pocket?" he thought, greatly astonished at the circumstance.

Then the incident on Broadway, connected with the flight of Nobby Notman and his brief encounter with that young man, occurred to him. It seemed as clear as sunlight that Nobby had stolen this pocketbook, been detected in the act, skipped to save himself, and seeing Hal, had stopped alongside of him long enough to drop the wallet in his pocket, so that if he was captured by his pursuers the goods would not be found on him, and consequently he couldn't be convicted of stealing. Nobby's hurried request that he (Hal) should meet him at the corner of Third avenue and Twenty-sixth street was evidently given with the view of regaining the pocketbook in case he managed to evade his pursuers.

"What a rascal that young fellow is!" exclaimed Hal. "It's only a question of time before he lands in the States prison. I don't see what any man can figure out of a life of thievery. I've

heard that professional crooks, no matter how successful in their calling, spend the larger part of their lives behind the bars. They take more chances than speculators in Wall street."

He opened the wallet and found it stuffed with a wad of bills. He counted the money and found that it amounted to something over \$900. Looking over the rest of the contents, he discovered several business cards, all of one kind, that read "John Bachelor, Stockbroker, No. — Wall street, New York."

Hal judged that the pocketbook was the property of Mr. Bachelor.

"I'll look him up in the city directory tomorrow and see where he lives, then I'll call on him and return him his property with an explanation of how it came in my possession," said Hal.

He opened his trunk and dropped the wallet into it. At that moment there was a knock on his door. Thinking it was Mrs. Adams, he opened it, and, to his surprise, in walked Nobby looking as chipper as ever.

CHAPTER VII.—Hal Returns the Stolen Pocketbook.

"Hello, Hadley, why didn't you meet me at the place I told you to?" said Nobby, coolly taking possession of a chair.

"Why did you want me to meet there?" asked Hal, displaying no particular pleasure over the young man's late visit.

"Oh, I wanted to have a talk with you," replied Nobby, evasively.

"How did you find out where I lived?"

"How do I find out lots of things? With my eyes."

"Why were you running away from that crowd tonight? Been stealing somebody's watch?"

"Me steal a watch! You must have a hard opinion of me."

"You stole mine down on the Bowery, and if I hadn't noticed right after you left me that it was gone——"

"What are watches made for but to go," grinned Nobby.

"Nobby Notman, I'm afraid you'll land in jail before long. How did you manage to escape the crowd tonight?"

"By using my feet."

"What did you steal?"

"Well, as I know you won't give me away, I'll admit that I pinched a wallet."

"Which you dropped into my pocket."

Nobby grinned.

"You found it?" he said.

"I did. Suppose I had been arrested as your accomplice?"

"How could you?"

"The people saw you grab me, and one of them might have seen you put the wallet in my pocket. I'd have been locked up, and would have had a lot of trouble trying to clear myself."

"What's the use of talking about what didn't happen? Hand me over the wallet and we'll look into it. Maybe you've done that already."

"I have."

"You found a stack of bills in it, didn't you?"

"I did."

"How much altogether?"

"Quite a sum."

"Hand it over and I'll divvy with you."

"No, you won't, Nobby. I'm going to return that wallet to its owner."

"You are?"

"I am."

"Oh, come now, don't be a clam. You aren't so flush but half of that money will come in handy for you."

"I'm not making use of stolen property."

"Please yourself, but don't give it back to the owner. You might get into trouble."

"I'll risk that."

"Then you won't turn it over to me?" said Nobby with a look of disgust.

"No."

"But I need money badly."

"Then go to work and earn it."

"I would, only work doesn't agree with my constitution."

"I should imagine that stealing was harder than honest labor."

"Everybody is entitled to a living. The geezer I took that wallet from is a high roller, and he'll never miss what's in it."

"You had no right to take it just the same."

"Say, you're too particular."

"I believe that honesty is the best policy."

"Pooh! Most everybody steals nowadays. If you read the papers you'll see that the common people, like you and me, are being plundered right along. The politicians soak us in taxes; the store-keepers bleed us when we buy; the trusts——"

"What's the use of talking about all that? That's something that can't be helped under the present order of things."

"You admit it's a fact. Well, then why should I not try to get square by getting my hooks in whenever I can? If it's fair for one it's fair for another."

"Your argument is entirely wrong, Notman."

"No, it isn't"

"When you get caught you'll find you'll come out at the short end."

"I don't intend to get caught if I can help myself."

"We won't argue the matter. I wish you'd go now. I want to turn in. I also hope you won't come around here again, for it's no honor to be connected with you."

Nobby grinned.

"You're too honest, Hadley. You'll land in the poorhouse some day."

"I hope not; but that is better than landing in jail."

"I made a mistake in dropping that wallet in your pocket."

"If you'd been caught with it in your possession you wouldn't have thought so."

"You're going to return it?"

"As sure as you're sitting there."

"You ought to get a reward."

"I don't expect any."

"If you should get any, will you divvy with me?"

"That would be putting a premium on thievery."

"Nonsense! It would be doing the fair thing. Well, I'll go now. Lend me a dollar. I'm flat broke."

"I don't see why I should support you. I have all I can do to support myself. However, I'll let you have a dollar, hoping it will keep you out of further trouble for the present."

"Thanks," said Nobby, taking the money. "That's favor number two. Maybe I'll be able to return them some time. Goodby."

"Good-night," said Hal, closing the door.

On Monday morning Hal carried the wallet downtown with him. He showed it to his employer, told him how he got it, and asked permission to go to Wall street to return it to the owner. He received permission to do so. He reached Wall street, and was looking for the number, when a gentleman came out of a building, crossed the sidewalk and sprang into a waiting cab. Hal recognized him as Mr. Hooker, and he made a rush for the vehicle. He was anxious to have an explanation from the lawyer. The cab, however, drove off so quickly that his purpose was defeated. He gazed after the receding vehicle in much disappointment. He might have chased it, but the chances were against him catching up with it. A few steps further on he reached the number he was looking for. Mr. Bachelor's office was on the third floor, and Hal entered the reception-room and asked for the broker. He was shown into a private room.

"What can I do for you, young man?" asked Mr. Bachelor.

"Did you lose a wallet on Saturday night?"

"A young thief stole my pocketbook Saturday night," replied the broker, looking sharply at Hal.

"May I ask what you know about it?"

"On Broadway near Twenty-eighth street?"

"In a store on Broadway near Twenty-eighth street."

"You discovered your loss in time to give chase to the thief, but he escaped?"

"Yes."

"I was on Broadway at the time and saw the beginning of the pursuit. The thief rushed up to me, grabbed me by the arm, pulled me around and then kept on."

"Well?" said the broker, curiously, wondering what was coming.

"He ran around into Twenty-ninth street, with the crowd after him. When I reached my lodgings and was going to bed I found a wallet in my side pocket."

"Ah!" exclaimed the broker, in a tone of interest.

"There was a sum of money in it and a bunch of your cards. I judged the wallet belonged to you. Will you give me an idea of how much money the pocket book contained?"

"Something over \$900. There were also valuable memoranda."

"I didn't pay any attention to the papers after seeing the cards. Here is the wallet," and Hal pulled it out of his pocket.

"That is mine," said the broker, taking it.

He dumped the money out and examined the papers, evidently caring more for them than the cash. Finding everything all right, he said:

"I am much obliged to you, young man, for returning this to me. Although not the thief, you might easily have retained it under the circumstances and no one would have been the wiser. Evidently you are an honest boy, and honesty ought to be suitably rewarded, it is so scarce in this world."

He peeled off four \$50 bills and offered them to Hal.

"I don't want any reward for bringing it to you, sir. The wallet is your property, and it was my duty to return it to you. I see no reason why you should pay me anything."

"You are entitled to something for going out of your way to bring it to me, without considering the question of your honesty. I can well afford to make you what I consider a suitable present. If I needed the money it might be different. Oblige me by taking it. I should like to know your name."

"My name is Harry Hadley," accepting the bills reluctantly.

"Are you employed in this neighborhood?"

"I am working for W. S. Moore, of no. — John street."

At that moment a stout, pompous-looking man, expensively dressed, walked into the room without knocking. Hal got up and prepared to leave.

"Hello, Buchanan. You know about that pocket book I lost Saturday night?"

"I ought to, for I was with you at the time."

"It's just been returned to me."

"Indeed! Without the money, of course?"

"No, with the money and everything intact."

"The police caught the thief, then?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Then how came you to get your pocketbook back?"

"This young man returned it to me."

The visitor looked curiously at Hal.

"He is not the——"

"Thief? Of course not. He came into possession of my property in an odd way. I'll tell you," and the broker gave him Hal's explanation.

"How did you know the pocketbook belonged to Mr. Bachelor?" asked the caller of Hal.

"From a bunch of cards I had in it," replied the broker.

"I should think the money, nearly a thousand dollars, would have been a temptation——"

"Not to this young man," said Mr. Bachelor. "There are some honest people in the world, and he is evidently one of them."

Mr. Buchanan looked at Hal as if he was a natural curiosity.

"I suppose you don't need money particularly?" he said. "Your people are probably well fixed."

"I have no people, sir. I am an orphan. In fact, I haven't a friend in the world but the lady and her daughter I am rooming with."

"Indeed! Not a friend in the world? That's curious for a nice young man as you appear to be," said the visitor, in a skeptical tone.

"Well, you see I am a stranger in New York. Haven't been here a month yet," replied Hal.

"Ah, that accounts for it," said the broker, who had seemed as surprised at the boy's statement as his visitor.

"Where did you come from?" asked Mr. Buchanan.

"From California."

"California, eh?" said the visitor, looking sharply at Hal. "Your name is——"

"Harry Hadley."

Mr. Buchanan gave a start as if he had trodden on a venomous snake.

"Harry Hadley!" he repeated, running his tongue over his lips.

Hal was somewhat surprised at his manner.

"Where are you living?" asked the visitor, after a pause.

"At No. — West Twenty-second street."

The gentleman repeated the address to himself, as if it interested him.

"Are you engaged in any kind of occupation?" he said.

"Yes, sir," and Hal told him where he was employed.

"I suppose you have rewarded him for returning your property," said the visitor to the broker.

"Yes; but I had some difficulty in getting him to take anything," replied Mr. Bachelor. "He is rather an unusual young man."

"Humph!" ejaculated the caller.

Hal thought it was time to take his leave, and did so, after the broker had thanked him again for bringing back his wallet.

CHAPTER VIII.—Hal Takes Jessie to Terrace Garden.

"I suppose it was all right to take that \$200 since the gentleman insisted on it," thought Hal on his way back to the store; "but I don't like to be paid for merely doing my duty. Of course it is a good thing to have a little money to fall back on, in case anything should happen. I might be taken sick, though in that case Mrs. Adams would have to send me to a hospital, and it wouldn't cost me anything there if I didn't have any money. I took this money as much for Mrs. Adams' sake as for my own. She and Miss Jessie are desperately hard up. I heard the landlady reading them the riot act again last night, and threatening to turn them out unless they settled up a balance of \$20 rent this week. There isn't much chance of them getting the money unless I come to their rescue, and that I mean to do. I'd be willing to divide my last cent with them. Why I should take such a strong interest in persons who are almost strangers to me I don't know; but somehow they don't seem like strangers to me. Rather like dear friends. They are treating me fine at any rate, and I shall certainly stand by them."

When he returned to his lodgings that evening he went in to see the Adamses. He told them about the pocketbook incident, and did not even conceal his acquaintance with the thief, nor the fact that Notman had visited him Saturday night, thinking to recover the wallet.

Then he told them how he had returned the pocketbook to its owner that day, with everything in it, just as it had come into his possession, and how the broker had made him take \$200 for doing so.

"You deserve it," said Mrs. Adams. "Many people would have kept that \$900, and destroyed the wallet. That's a lot of money, and would certainly prove a strong temptation to the average person. You are clearly a boy of sterling character, and we have believed from the first that you were just what you have shown yourself to be."

"Thank you, Mrs. Adams, for your good opinion of me. I have always tried to do the right thing. That is the way I was brought up. And now I want you to accept a favor from me. I

have no particular use for the \$200 at present, for I am earning enough to pay my expenses, so I propose to loan you half of it," said Hal, offering her two of the \$50 bills.

"No, no; you have already done more for us than we could expect of one who until a month ago was a stranger to us," replied Mrs. Adams.

"Mrs. Adams, I know you need some of the money very badly. It would be no pleasure for me to bank these bills, knowing that you and your daughter were worrying how to meet your expenses. You will excuse the interest I take in you, but you have both shown me much kindness at a time when I needed it, and I am grateful to you. You will, therefore, not refuse to share in my good luck. I have nobody else to offer it to, and it will give me great satisfaction to feel that I have removed the difficulties which at present surround you."

"My dear boy, if I may call you so, it seems as if Heaven sent you to us in our hour of need. Your offer is gratefully appreciated by us, and if you will loan us \$20, it is all that we ought to take from you. We already owe you \$5. It may be some time before we can repay even the \$25."

After some trouble Hal forced one of the bills on Mrs. Adams, but she positively would accept no more, so the boy let it go at that. With the \$50 she was able to settle with Mrs. Bunker in full, and still have a balance to call upon, which relieved their minds of a great load. Their gratitude to Hal was boundless, and they tried in a hundred little ways to show their appreciation of his kindness and generosity. A few days afterward one of the clerks in the store presented Hal with an invitation to a vaudeville show and ball to be held in Terrace Garden on the following evening.

"Come up there and you'll have a good time," said the clerk. "I'll be there with my girl, and I'll introduce you to her."

"Thanks. I will endeavor to go," replied Hal.

When he reached his lodgings after supper he went into the sitting-room. He showed Jessie the invitation and asked her if she would go with him.

"It is very kind of you to ask me, Mr. Hadley, but I really have nothing to wear," replied the girl.

"Oh, nonsense! You can go out and get a dress ready made, with a hat to match it, and I'll present both to you as a birthday present. You told me that your birthday was coming next week," said Hal, in his genial way.

"Oh, but they would cost too much," she protested.

"How much?"

"Fifteen dollars at least; maybe more."

"Ho! What's \$15 to me when it's a question of giving you a good time?"

Jessie shook her head, though the prospect of attending an entertainment made her eyes glisten. Hal got up, went to the door and called out to her mother. When that lady appeared Hal put the case up to her.

"I want your daughter to go; that is, of course, if she's willing to go with me," he said. "She hasn't suitable clothes, she says. Well, I'll buy them as a birthday present for her. She will do me a favor by going with me, and that will

"make up for the present. I don't care to go there alone where I'll be among strangers."

Mrs. Adams understood Jessie's reasons for refusing so expensive a present, but what would have been out of the question from any one else she regarded as permissible from Hal, to whom they were growing more attached every day.

After some argument Hal tossed a \$20 bill into the mother's hands and told her to get Jessie fixed up for the entertainment, and the matter was so arranged. Hal got a new suit and other things for the occasion, and after supper on the following evening entered the sitting-room to see if Jessie was ready. She was, and Hal declared that she looked finer than silk, as she certainly did.

She had picked out a gown that not only fitted her to perfection, but set off her natural charms to the best advantage, and the hat completed the whole picture. Mrs. Adams regarded her with pardonable pride, and she was also proud to think Hal showed so much interest in her daughter.

"Have a good time, my dears. Pardon me, Mr. Hadley, for the familiarity, but you almost seem like a son to me," said the happy mother.

"That's all right, Mrs. Adams," replied Hal, breezily. "You are as good as a mother to me, and your daughter as nice to me as a sister. I shall try to give her a good time."

So they went to the big hall, several blocks uptown, and found a crowd of invited guests entering the main doorway.

They secured good seats and enjoyed the show hugely.

"You will stay to the dance, won't you, Miss Jessie?" said Hal, after the curtain fell and the audience were retiring to the side rooms to enable the attaches to remove the seats to one side and sweep up the floor, preparatory to the terpsichorean part of the entertainment.

"Yes, if you wish me to, Mr. Hadley; but we mustn't stay out too late."

"We will go whenever you say," replied Hal. "You had better go to the ladies' dressing-room and remove your wrap and put your hat away. I will escort you to the door, and will look for you in say fifteen minutes or so."

Hal put his hat in the gentleman's cloak-room and then walked over to wait for Jessie. He sat on a back chair and watched the crowd around him.

Presently a sporty chap approached with a young lady in a rainbow attire. She was got up to beat the band, though her clothes were not at all expensive. Hal was amazed to recognize the young man as Nobby Notman. They sat down directly in front of him, and Nobby seemed quite devoted to his partner. The young lady, however, seemed to be in an unamiable frame of mind, and did not appear to appreciate his attentions.

"Now don't be cross, Tilda," Hal heard Nobby say. "What's the use of my bringing you all the way up here if you're going to be miserable?"

"Don't talk to me, Nobby Notman," snapped the girl; "I hate you, and I'm ashamed of you."

"Well, I must say, Miss O'Brien, that you have very little respect for my feelings," protested Nobby, with an injured look.

"You're the meanest fellow I know," said the young lady, fanning herself with considerable vigor.

"I am? Well, I like that. What more could I do for you? You said you must have a cab, and I borrowed the price to accommodate you. Then you insisted on a bouquet, and I bought you a bouquet, though I haven't paid for it yet. Then you split your gloves, or one of them, and made me get you a new pair. I had to pinch them, and I might have got pinched myself if I hadn't been slicker than greased lightning."

"What's a pair of gloves and a bokay—and what's a cab? Any young man I know would have done that much for me, and he wouldn't have been so indelicate as to mention it afterward. Oh, you're a mean fellow!" said the girl.

"Come, I say, look here, Tilda——"

"And I am such a nervous creature—so sensitive—that the least annoyance or disappointment always upsets me."

"How have I annoyed or disappointed you?"

"You don't keep your promises."

"Don't I? What promise have I broken?"

"We've been keeping company for six weeks."

"Seven, Tilda—seven whole weeks."

"Well, seven, then. You promised if I would shake Patsy Dugan and go with you you'd give me a gold watch and chain."

"I intend to give you a gold watch and chain just as soon as I can get next to one that will fit that pink belt of yours."

"I don't care anything about your intentions; what I want is for you to keep your word."

"Give me time, can't you?"

"You've had seven weeks of time."

"That isn't long unless you're on the Island. I'll have one for you in a day or two. I might even get hold of one to-night."

"How could you? The jewelry stores are all closed by this time."

"Don't you worry about the jewelry stores."

"I suppose not," said the girl, with a toss of her head. "You're afraid they might charge——"

"The jeweler might make a stiff charge against me if——"

"You're always ready with some paltry excuse. Now I'm going to put my foot down——"

"I haven't objection if you put both of your feet down if you wish to, Tilda. You don't have to——"

"Nobby Notman, will you listen to me?" cried the young lady sharply.

"I'm listening."

"If you don't have a gold watch and chain for me Saturday night before we go to the Swarrey of the Seven Jolly Bachelors, I'll be done with you forever."

"You shall have them if you'll only look pleasant and favor me with your smiles this evening."

"Do you mean that?"

"I do."

"I'll take a chance on you; but if you fail you know what'll happen."

At that moment Hal saw Jessie standing at the door and he hastened to join her. He took her to a seat at some distance from Nobby and his girl, for he didn't care to have that young man recognize him there. In a little while the music struck up for the grand march and Hal took Jessie out on the floor.

Couple after couple joined in behind the president of the association, and a variety of marching, counter-marching, and other evolutions were

indulged in till the floor manager's whistle broke the lines up into groups for the lancers.

The set that Hal and Jessie attached themselves to lacked one couple to make it complete, and one of the assistant managers hustled to fill it up. To Hal's consternation Nobby and his young lady were rushed up. Nobby nearly had a fit when he saw Hal.

"What, you here, my buck!" he exclaimed. "Who'd have thought it. Miss O'Brien, my particular friend, Mr. Hadley—one of the swell mob."

Tilda bowed and favored Hal with a coquettish smile.

"Who's the dame, Hadley?" said Nobby, nodding at Jessie.

But just then the music struck up and Hal was saved from the necessity of introducing him to his partner. At the close of the dance Hal hurried Jessie away. He didn't meet Nobby again that evening, much to his satisfaction, and at intermission prepared to take Jessie home.

When she joined him with her hat on, she said:

"There's some excitement in the lady's cloak room."

"What about? Some lady fainted?"

"No; but one of the young ladies has lost her gold watch, and she feels terrible over it. She thinks it was stolen from her by a young man she was dancing with."

Hal looked startled. He recalled the conversation he had overheard between Nobby and his girl, and had no doubt but the young sport had pinched the watch in order to placate Miss O'Brien. He remarked that it was too bad, and then he and Jessie left the hall.

CHAPTER I.—Hal and the Boss' Nephew.

On the following day, while Hal was out on an errand, he saw Lawyer Hooker entering the door of an office building. He made a dash after him, but the gentleman reached an elevator, which started up immediately, before the boy could reach him, and so Hal lost track of him again.

Hal would have waited till he came back, but he could not afford the time, as he was in a hurry, and so greatly disappointed, he went on his way. Although he was unaware of the fact, his movements were watched for several days by an emissary of a person who took considerable interest in him.

The person in question, we may as well admit, was George Buchanan, who was an operator in Wall street stocks, and who, the reader will remember, came into Broker Bachelor's office while Hal was there the morning he returned the pocketbook.

Why he should take such an interest in the boy he had never met before he best knew himself. At any rate he appeared curious to learn how the boy conducted himself, and the man he set to shadow Hal, after staying on the job for several evenings, reported what he had found out.

The report was rather meager, but one particular threw the operator into a fit, and for the moment he was so disturbed as to say things that would not look well in print.

The particular to which we refer was that Hal was rooming with a widow lady and her daughter

named Adams. It was like waving a red flag before an angry bull to mention the name of Adams to Mr. Buchanan.

Evidently he didn't like the name. A broker by the name of Adams had the misfortune some years before to be lined up against Mr. Buchanan in some deal they were both interested in from different points of view.

The operator managed things so that the broker was driven to the wall and was forced out of the Street. The gentleman owned a number of cheap flats from which he derived a considerable revenue. Learning that he had a tenant named Adams, he did not rest till he ruined the man and dispossessed him.

As soon as he learned that Hal was stopping with a party by the name of Adams he dictated a note to a certain gentleman who called occasionally at his office and sent it off by a district messenger. The messenger came back after awhile with word that the party he had carried the note to had gone to Philadelphia that afternoon and might not return for a week. Mr. Buchanan did not seem pleased at this news, and with a face that suggested a heavy thunder-gust, he said more things not in keeping with his character as a church deacon, put on his hat and went home.

Up to this point things had been going fine with Hal at the store, but trouble was in store for him, and it came in the shape of Phil Langdon, the proprietor's nephew.

This young gentleman was not popular in the establishment, as he had a supercilious manner and a bad temper, and was, moreover, lazy and careless.

Mr. Moore, however, for some reason, failed to see the shortcomings of his relative, possibly because he was not brought into contact with the young man to any great extent, and more probably because Phil was shrewd enough to present the best side of his character before his uncle, while he reserved his worst for everybody else. Phil had been away ill for a matter of two months and it was during his absence that Hal came to work at the store. Hal was the first, after the porter, to reach the office in the morning. The porter swept up, and by the time Hal came at a few minutes before eight, the counting-room was ready for him to dust, which duty he had taken on himself to help the overworked porter out.

Hal was always trying to help somebody, and the recipients of his favors appreciated his kindness, and were agreed that he was the finest boy in the city. One morning as Hal was dusting off the tall desks Phil came in—his first appearance since his enforced absence.

"Hello, who are you?" he asked surlily, gazing in an unfriendly way at Hal.

Hal had heard about Phil Langdon, and his crooked disposition, but as the young man was not looked for to turn up unexpectedly in the middle of the week, he did not associate this person with the boss' nephew. He supposed he was some outsider who had called on business.

"I am the shipping clerk," replied Hal pleasantly, for he had just been appointed to that post with a raise of wages.

That happened to be Phil's job, but his uncle had decided to give him a desk in the counting-room when he returned.

"You the shipping clerk," sneered Phil, more

offensively than before; "I guess not," with an accent on the not.

"I had an idea that I was," laughed Hal.

His laugh and undisturbed demeanor irritated Phil.

"Who are you, anyway? What are you doing in this store? Are you a new errand boy?" he growled.

"I told you what I was. Now tell me what I can do for you," said Hal.

"Say, do you know who I am?" snarled Phil.

"I do not. How could I know you when I never saw you before?"

"Well, I am the nephew of the boss, that's who I am."

"Are you Philip Langdon, who has been away sick?" asked Hal, in surprise.

"Yes, I'm Phil Langdon. I'm the shipping clerk of this joint, and if you have been doing my work while I was away, you can vacate the job right away, for I'm going to work this morning."

"You'll have to wait till Mr. Moore comes, for I have certain orders on hand that I have to attend to this morning."

"Me wait! I guess not. Who do you think you are giving orders what to do? If you don't mind your P's and Q's I'll have you fired in double quick order."

Hal looked at him, and seeing how ugly he was, made no reply, but went on finishing up his dusting.

"Did you hear what I said?" roared Phil, in a furious tone.

"I heard you."

"Then why don't you answer?"

"I have nothing further to say."

Phil doubled up his fists and started for the swinging gate. Just then two of the clerks came in and saw Phil with some surprise.

"Hello, Langdon, got on your pins again?" said one.

That distracted Phil's attention from Hal, and he got to talking with the two clerks. Hal put the duster away and went to the shipping clerk's desk at the back of the store. There he got busy with the goods he had to send away that morning. Fifteen minutes later Phil came swaggering through the store. He hung up his coat and hat, and then, with an ugly look on his face, he walked up to the desk where Hal was addressing some tags.

"Get out of here. This is my desk," and he began to elbow Hal roughly aside.

Hal was a boy of resolution and action. He never looked for trouble, but if it came his way he believed in taking the bull by the horns. He always tried the easy way, if he thought it would work, but in the present instance he saw the kind of fellow he had to deal with, and he decided that the only way in this case was to stand firmly on his rights and take the consequences. Mr. Moore had appointed him shipping clerk, and he proposed to remain shipping clerk until relieved of its duties and responsibilities by his employer.

He dropped his pen and turned square around on Langdon.

"This may have been your desk when you were taken sick, Phil Langdon, but it is not your desk at the present moment," he said with cool sturdiness, looking the bully in the eyes. "Your uncle made me shipping clerk, consequently I am ship-

ping clerk at the present moment. If, when he comes down, he gives me directions to turn the position over to you, I will do so with great pleasure. He will be here shortly, so you won't have long to wait. In the meantime, as I have a lot of work to do, I hope you will withdraw till the matter is settled."

"Say, you are putting on a lot of frills for a new clerk," snarled Phil. "I am not in the habit of taking any back talk from anybody in this store, I don't care who he is, and I won't take it from you. I want you to get away from that desk."

"I am not going to get away from it. This is my post and I shall remain right here and attend to my duties."

With a howl of anger Phil made a rush at him. Hal stepped quickly aside to avoid the onset. Phil's foot hit a small and heavy box, he lost his balance, and pitched head forward on to a pile of boxes ready for shipment.

His head came in contact with one, cutting a gash on his forehead over his eye, and he rolled over half stunned on the floor. The porter and a clerk employed on an upper floor witnessed the whole occurrence, and neither felt a bit sorry for the boss' nephew.

The accident which had happened to Phil Langdon was more than Hal expected, and it rather disturbed him.

"He only got what was coming to him," said the porter, coming forward. "He's a hard case, and I'm sorry he's back again."

"We must do something for him. Help me get him over to the sink," said Hal.

As Hal bent down to take his arm, Phil opened his eyes. The sight of Hal's face brought him around as quick as a wink. With an imprecation he sprang on his feet, picked up a heavy monkey-wrench lying on a case and rushed at the boy with rage-inflamed eyes, as if he meant to brain him. Hal was on his guard and caught his descending wrist, holding it with a vise-like grip that brought Phil up standing.

"I'll kill you!" he hissed, trying to free his arm.

"No, you won't," replied Hal, coolly. "John, take that wrench from him."

The porter tore it out of his grasp, then Hal released him.

He looked around for something else to use as a weapon, and sried a hammer.

He grabbed at it, but Hal, surmising his purpose, was quicker than he, and tore it out of his fingers. Then Phil struck at him with his fists.

The ex-college boy easily avoided his blows, and made no attempt to return them, as he did not propose to scrap with the boss' nephew if he could avoid it. The porter interfered and tried to pacify Phil. He wouldn't be pacified, for he was fighting mad. A couple other store clerks, attracted by the disturbance, came up.

They, too, were surprised to see Langdon in the store. Hal explained matters while the porter and one of the clerks held the gory-looking Phil.

At this juncture Mr. Moore, who had reached the store, heard that there was a rumpus at the back of his establishment, and he appeared on the scene.

He looked with astonishment at his nephew.

"What's the trouble here?" he asked. "How came you to be hurt?"

"I want that fellow fired. He insulted me, and wouldn't let me start in to work," answered Phil, doggedly.

Hal immediately spoke up in his own defense. He gave a complete account of everything, including Phil's scurvy conduct to him in the counting-room. The porter and the clerk, who had seen a part of the trouble at the shipping clerk's desk, backed him up to the extent of their knowledge.

"I have made Hadley shipping clerk, and you had no right to interfere with him," said the merchant to his nephew. "I am surprised that you should take a dangerous weapon like that wrench and attempt to strike the boy. You might have injured him severely, and got yourself into a peck of trouble. Don't let me hear of any such conduct on your part again. Come into the office and I will put you to work."

That brought the trouble to an end, and Hal went on with his work.

CHAPTER X.—A Boy from the Slums.

Hal had noticed a tough-looking lad hanging around the store at odd times since he came to work there. Twice he asked Hal if Phil Langdon had come back to work, and Hal had told him no. He wondered what such a boy wanted with the boss' nephew.

Late on the afternoon that the trouble took place between him and Phil, Hal, while looking after the shipment of some goods, saw the boy again. The kid sidled up to him.

"Say, boss, has Phil Langdon got back yet?"

"Yes, he came back this morning," replied Hal, looking at him sharply.

"Is he in de store now?"

"Yes."

"T'anks," and the youth moved off down toward Pearl street.

"He's mighty anxious to learn about Langdon's return," thought Hal. "Maybe the boss' nephew owes him something for papers, for he looks like a newsboy; or maybe he's a bootblack, though he had no box."

That day, though the store closed at 5.30, as usual, all the clerks had to remain to pull up on their work. Hal was also directed to help the porter pack some goods that were to go out first thing in the morning.

It was seven o'clock and dark before the people got away. The porter always locked up the store, and Hal left him going around the cellar with a lantern in his hand to see that all was right.

Hal was standing in a dark corner, donning his coat and hat, when, to his surprise, he saw Phil Langdon approach his standing desk in a cautious manner, and start to open it. Hal knew he was up to some mischief, and was about to interfere, when a dark object glided up alongside Phil, and touched him on the arm.

Langdon jumped as if he had been stung by some venomous insect and swung around. The light of the lamp above the desk showed him the tough and ragged youth whom Hal identified as

the kid who had made inquiries about the young man.

"Billy Day!" cried Phil, in a nervous tone. "What in thunder are you doing here? Don't you know——"

"I've been tryin' to see yer for two months, boss," said the lad. "They told me yer wuz sick, but I knowed yer'd get back some time."

"What do you want to see me about? I think you've got a lot of cheek after what——"

"Yer needn't mention dat. I wuz pinched all right an' sent to the Protectory, but I made me escape an' have kept low ever since. Now I want me divvy."

"Your divvy! What do you mean, you young scamp?"

"Dat's a nice name to call me as wuz yer pal in dat job."

"How dare you connect yourself with me, you little thief?"

"I like dat, an' it wuz you dat made me a t'ief, 'cause me folks needed de money yer promised me but which I didn't get, 'cause I wuz nabbed. De job went t'rough, jest de same, an' yer collared de bills. De jedge said I must have hid 'em, 'cause dey didn't turn up. I might have split on yer, an' den yer'd gone to de jug yerself; but I ain't no informer, s'long as I believed yer'd do de right t'ing by me. By de way yer talk now it strikes me dat yer want to t'row me over, an' me mudder sick an' starvin' an' needin' de money. I wouldn't care if it wasn't for her; but I've got to have de dough, an' if yer act rusty about it I'll see yer uncle in de mornin' an' tell him de whole trut'. Dat's wot I'll do," said the lad, doggedly.

"You'll get nothing from me, you young rascal. If you don't clear out right away, and keep away from the store in the future, I'll put the cops on to you, and have you sent back to the Protectory," said Phil.

"Den I'll get square wit' yer, see if I don't."

"You'll get square with me, you little vagabond?"

"Yes, I will. Yer not'in' but a big bluff."

"I'll fix you right now, you young imp."

He sprang at the boy and seized him by the throat. Bending him across a pile of boxes he proceeded to choke the boy into submission. Hal decided that it was time for him to interfere. He sprang forward, seized Phil's wrists and tore his fingers from the lad's throat.

"Do you want to commit murder, Phil Langdon?" he said, as the street arab staggered away, gasping for breath.

"You—you, Hadley!" ejaculated Langdon.

"Yes, it's me, and it's lucky for both of you that I was here to interfere."

"Blame you for a butter-in; I've a good mind to——"

"What?" asked Hal, looking him in the eye.

"No matter," said Phil, intimidated by the boy's resolute manner. "I'll fix you, mark my words. You won't stay in this store long."

"Not if you can help it, I dare say. But maybe you won't have your own way. What did you intend to do when you started to open my desk? I saw you. You were going to work some kind of mischief. Now look here, Phil Langdon, I want you to understand that I'm never asleep. I won't stand none of your monkey business. I shall keep an eye on you, and if you try to in-

jure me in any way in this store I'll send you back to the hospital as sure as you stand there."

Hal's determined attitude took all the starch out of Langdon. Like all bullies, he took water when he was up against his match. At that juncture the porter's steps sounded on the cellar stairs, and Langdon took advantage of the interruption to stuff his hands in his pockets and walk off. The tough boy had witnessed the scene with a great deal of satisfaction. He recognized Hal as his preserver and felt grateful to him.

"Yer saved me life, boss," he said, coming up to Hal as Langdon strode toward the street door.

"You're welcome, young fellow," replied Hadley. "Come, we have to leave now."

"Gosh, but yer give it to him straight from de shoulder," said Billy Day. "An' ter-morrer I won't do a t'ing to him. Yer couldn't spare me a dime, could yer, boss? I hate to ask it of yer, but me mudder is starvin', an' she's dat sick I'm t'inkin' she ought to be in de hospital."

"Is your mother really so bad off as that?" asked Hal, as they passed out into the street.

"Dat's wot she is, boss; and I ain't had not'in' to eat meself all day, either."

"Is that so? Then I'll see that you have some supper. I'll eat downtown to-night, as it's late, and you shall eat with me."

"Do yer mean dat?" said the youth, eagerly, his eyes glistening at the prospect of a meal.

"I do, and then I'll go and see what can be done for your mother if you'll take me where you live."

"I'll take yer; but we live in a tough street, and it ain't jest de place for gents like youse to go to."

"Isn't it safe?"

"Yer'll be safe wit' me, I guess."

They entered a small restaurant on William street and sat at a table.

"What'll you have, Billy? I believe that's your name."

"Me name's Billy Day. I'll take anyt'in' yer might order for me."

"Waiter, two plates of vegetable soup," said Hal.

When the soup was set before them, Hadley ordered two portions of steak with fried potatoes, and two cups of coffee.

"Now, Billy, from what I overheard of your conversation with Langdon at the store, I judge that you've been mixed up in some kind of crooked business, in which he also was interested. Is that a fact?"

"Yes, dat's a fact."

"Have you any objection to telling me what it was all about?"

"No, boss, I'll tell yer."

From the story that Billy told it appeared that he was hired temporarily to fill the shoes of an errand boy who was sick. Among other things it was his duty to help the porter sweep up in the morning, and the counting-room fell to his share.

This brought him to the store half an hour before the clerks arrived. One morning he received an envelope, containing \$100, from the Adams Express Co., and signed for the same. Phil Langdon was the first of the regular employees to arrive, and he saw Billy take in the envelope. He took it out of the boy's hands and looked at it.

As a matter of fact he had come down early

to get hold of it himself. He told Billy to let him have the envelope, say nothing about it, and he would give him \$20.

Billy needed the money bad because his mother had just been taken sick, and they had no money in the house. Not knowing that he was sure to be detected, he agreed to Langdon's proposition, and a day or two afterward the cashier learned that Billy had received the express envelope.

He was interrogated on the subject, but, following his tempter's instructions, denied all knowledge of the matter.

An investigation disclosed his signature on the express sheet, and he was arrested. When taken before the magistrate he denied that he had taken the money, but would tell nothing more.

The result was he was committed to the Catholic Protectors. From that institution he managed to make his escape, and since then had been keeping shady, venturing down to John street occasionally to try and see Langdon and get the \$20 that young man had promised him. Phil's spell of sickness had prevented them coming together until that evening, when the interview between them had proved decidedly unsatisfactory to Billy. He concluded by saying that he intended to call on the boss in the morning and tell the whole truth of the affair.

"I'm afraid you'll find that Langdon will deny that he had anything to do with the express envelope. How are you going to prove that he did?"

Billy hadn't expected that he'd have to prove anything, and he looked rather blank.

"The only thing I see you can do is to have me called to tell about the interview I overheard between you and Langdon this evening," said Hal. "While that will prove nothing, it will furnish a certain amount of circumstantial evidence against the boss' nephew, and is likely to arouse his uncle's suspicions concerning the truth."

Hal said he'd think the matter over, and advised the lad to see him before they appeared before Mr. Moo. Billy said he'd do whatever his new friend advised, and then they left the restaurant together, the lad declaring that he hadn't had such a meal in months.

CHAPTER XI.—Poverty Row.

It was close on to nine o'clock when Billy led Hal up a dingy-looking street in one of the most wretched neighborhoods in New York City. The house where Billy and his mother lived was an old-time, four-story ramshackle tenement, crowded from cellar to roof with the poorest and toughest of New York's population. It was right in the midst of similar tenements, stretching away on both sides of it, and another tenement was in the rear, separated by a small, filthy yard, paved with stone worn down by the feet of successive generations of children, notwithstanding those same feet were mostly naked ones.

But for the risk to human life it would have been a good thing had the whole block, and its immediate neighborhood, been wiped out to its foundation by fire. Billy led Hal through a narrow hallway, reeking with dirt, into the yard, and thence into the black looking entry of the squalid tenement in the rear. Hal shuddered in-

voluntarily as he passed through the crooked doorway.

A scrap between husband and wife was going on in one of the second floor apartments, and Hal grabbed Billy by the arm and told him he was afraid there would be murder committed in there.

"Naw," replied Billy, indifferently; "dat's only Hagan and his old woman makin' love to each udder. Dat's a continuous show."

Most every floor, as they ascended, had its own sounds, and they were new to Hal's ears.

The noisiest of them all was the tenements directly under the two rooms occupied by Billy and his mother. A kind of high jinks appeared to be going on in there. The scraping of a wheezy fiddle, the beat of dancing feet that shook the decaying old house, mingled with shouts of laughter and snatches of songs, saluted the ears of Hal and his young conductor as they crept up the dirty staircase.

"T'ink of dat goin' on under me mudder, and she was a-groanin' bad wid de pain when I seen her last," said Billy. "She ought to be in de hospital where t'ings are quiet."

"I will see about getting her there right away," said Hal, as they landed on the top entry.

"I don't hear me mudder now," said Billy, as they approached his door.

"One can hear nothing but that din downstairs," said Hal.

"Mudder, mudder!" cried Billy, as he darted into the living room, which was as dark as the landing.

He got no answer. Hal followed him in with a lighted match in his fingers. Billy, alarmed by receiving no reply from his sick mother, rushed into the inner room where she lay on a wretched apology for a bed. Hal, seeing a lamp on the mantel over a fireless stove, proceeded to light it.

"Mudder, mudder, wot's de matter wit' yer?" he heard Billy say in the adjoining room. "Why don't yer say somet'in'? Yer ain't got no light, an' yer so cold."

Then followed a sudden wailing sound from the youth.

"She's dead. She's dead. Oh, mudder, yer went an' died while I wuz out tryin' ter get somet'in' for yer to eat. An' it's all de fault of dat mug wot owes me de divvy and won't stump up. I'll get square wit' him if I go to de 'lectric chair. Oh, mudder, mudder, wot'll I do wit'out yer?"

Hal's heart beat quickly as he listened to Billy's pitiful accents. He stood undecided with the lamp in his hand, its flickering wick throwing ghostly shadows in the four corners of the room. From beneath came up the mirth of a reckless bunch enjoying themselves in their own way. Billy's moans appealed to his sympathetic heart, and he ventured into the next room. The tough boy was supporting his dead mother in his arms. Hal noticed the waxen pallor of her face and the staring eyes, already fixed in death. Evidently she had been dead for some time.

He placed his hand on Billy's shoulder.

"Poor fellow," he said, in a tone of sympathy, "I feel dead sorry for you, but your mother is far better off now. She is in Heaven, among the angels, and she will never suffer any more."

At the touch and the pitying voice of his new acquaintance Billy stifled his sobs and looked up.

"Yer talk nice," he said. "Do yer t'ink me mudder is happy now?"

"I'm sure of it," replied Hal. "Cheer up. You can do nothing more for her. Your duty now is to yourself. You must shake your old life and become a good boy."

"How kin I? I'm tough, and I've been a t'ief, dough I didn't gain not'in' by it. I'll be took up an' sent back to the Protectory. I don't want to go back, but wot kin I do when dere ain't nobody to help me."

"I'll help you, Billy, if you'll let me," said Hal.

"I'll do anyt'in' yer say, boss. Now dat me mudder is dead I don't care much wot happens."

Hal put the light down.

"Do you know the people in the next rooms on this floor?" he said.

"Yep. Mrs. Maloney, her old man an' t'ree kids."

"Then go in and tell the Maloneys that your mother is dead, and ask them to help you out."

"All right," replied Billy, and he left the room to do it.

Presently Mrs. Maloney, a stout Irish woman, came in, and seemed surprised when she saw a well-dressed, gentlemanly boy standing beside the corpse. Evidently she took him for some one of consequence, for she made a respectful bow, and remarked that it was sad.

"Yes, ma'am, it is," answered Hal. "Will you look after things here, ma'am?"

"Sure I will, sor," she said, proceeding to close the eyes of the corpse, put weights on them, and straighten out the stiffening limbs.

"Here are a couple of dollars, ma'am, to buy anything you may need for the emergency. It's all I have about me or I'd give you more," said Hal.

"Thank you, sir," she said, with another bob.

"I'll notify the coroner's office, and the city will look after the remains," said Hal.

"Yis, sor."

"I'm going now, Billy, and I'll have to ask you to guide me out of this neighborhood, after which you can come back," said Hal.

"All right, boss, I'll do it."

In a short time they were out of the district, and Hal felt greatly relieved, for the poverty and wretchedness he had seen greatly depressed him.

"Here's a half dollar, Billy, and that nearly cleans me out till I can get some more. You mustn't come to the store to-morrow to try and get square with Phil Langdon. It might end in your arrest. I'll have a talk with Mr. Moore, and then probably he'll want to hear your story. I'll try and fix matters with him so that he will agree not to turn you over to the police again. If he believes you he will get the judge to suspend the sentence he passed on you, and then we'll see about getting you a job, and a decent place to live. How does that strike you?"

"Bully," replied Billy. "You're all to de good, boss, an' I'll do wot ever yer says."

"That's right, Billy. Maybe I'll be able to make a man of you. To-morrow evening I want you to meet me at the corner of Pearl and John, and I'll give you some more change to pay your ex-

penses. Then you will learn whether you are to call on Mr. Moore or not."

Thus speaking, Hal bade the boy good-night, and started for the nearest elevated station.

CHAPTER XII.—Phil Langdon Gets What He Deserves.

Next morning Hal had an interview with his employer. His purpose was not to get back at Langdon but to square things for Billy. Hal rehearsed Billy's story, which he supplemented with the substance of the interview he had overheard between Phil Langdon and the boy. He also told the merchant how when he learned that Billy's mother was sick and starving he had gone with the youth to his wretched home in Poverty Row, only to find that the poor woman had died while her son was out trying to raise a little money for her.

Mr. Moore was rather staggered to hear that his nephew was implicated in the robbery of the Adams Express envelope, and expressed some doubts of its truth.

"Well, sir, you'll have to look at the matter according to your own judgment. I am making no charge against Langdon. I am simply interested in Billy Day, and I honestly believe that he wouldn't have taken the money if he hadn't been induced to do so."

"I should like to hear the boy's statement from his own lips," said the merchant, "and it is possible I may be able to tell from his manner whether he is speaking the truth. If I think he is I shall confront him with my nephew. He will naturally deny the charge, and the way he does it may show his innocence or guilt. At any rate, now that the question has been raised as to Langdon's integrity, I intend to sift it thoroughly, for, as I have intended to raise him eventually to a position of trust, I want to know if he is worthy of my confidence."

"I will see Billy this evening and will have him come here whenever you say," said Hal.

"Let it be at eleven to-morrow," replied the merchant.

"Very well, sir," said Hal, rising.

Hal met Billy as arranged between them, and after telling him to call at the store at eleven next morning, handed him a dollar. At that moment the youth spied a policeman approaching, and with a hasty "Good-by, boss," ran up Pearl Street like a hare with the hounds in full chase. The officer stopped Hal as he was about to cross the street.

"Do you know that boy?" he asked.

"I do."

"What's his name?"

"Billy Day."

"He's the lad I want. He escaped from the Catholic Protectory a month ago, and is subject to arrest on sight."

"I know all about it, officer. He was convicted of a theft; but the matter has just been reopened, and he's wanted as a witness against the party who incited him to steal the money."

"Are you from the District Attorney's office?"

"No, I'm from the merchant who was robbed, who is investigating the case. The boy is going

to call on him tomorrow and tell his story. If the facts are proved against the other party, the gentleman is going to see the magistrate about having the boy's commitment suspended."

"I'll take your word for all this, but as I have instructions to arrest the boy, I'll have to run him in if I catch him. In that case the gentleman will have to apply to the magistrate to have the case reopened in court."

The officer nodded and walked off, and Hal went uptown. Billy kept out of the way of the cops, and next morning at eleven he showed up at the store. He didn't ask for Mr. Moore, but went to the back to find Hal. Hal went into the private office and told Mr. Moore that the boy had come.

He was directed to send him in. The lad told his story in a way that bore an impress of truth, and the merchant's cross-examination only strengthened it. Mr. Moore placed him behind a screen and sent for his nephew. Phil indignantly denied the accusation and was then confronted by Billy. There was quite a scene, and the merchant reserved his decision, though he was convinced of his nephew's guilt. He told Billy to return at two o'clock, and then took him before the magistrate who had committed him. After some trouble Mr. Moore succeeded in getting Billy's commitment suspended on his promise to be responsible for his future good conduct. The merchant then gave the lad a job on the top floor at three dollars a week, and that afternoon Hal took him uptown and got a room for him in the house next to Mrs. Bunker's.

He bought Billy an outfit of clothes, which changed his personality very much indeed. A few days after that, while Hal was on the sidewalk superintending the receiving of some goods, Phil Langdon sneaked into his department, and finding the coast clear, hastily addressed several boxes to suit himself, and then tearing the shipping receipts out of the book, started to drop them into a hole in the wall.

Hearing a noise near by, he shoved the receipts into his pocket and walked hurriedly away.

As he did so Billy Day's head appeared above a pile of boxes, and the youth's eyes followed his retreating figure. When Hal returned to his desk he found Billy waiting for him. The boy told him what he had seen. Hal looked at the express receipt book and saw that three of the receipts he had made out were missing. He looked at the three cases nearby and saw they had been addressed by somebody other than himself. Mr. Moore came to the back of the store at that moment and Hal called his attention to the facts. Billy told what he had seen Langdon do. The merchant returned to his office, called his nephew in, and taxed him with his reprehensible act. He denied it.

"Turn out your pockets and let me see whether you have those receipts," said his uncle.

Langdon changed color, produced the receipts and declared he had only done it as a joke.

"Well, young man, this business of mine isn't run to afford a field for practical jokers to display their talents. It would have been no joke had those cases been shipped off to fictitious addresses. My shipping clerk would have been in hot water, and it is clear to me, from previous

happenings in my establishment that you intended to make trouble for him. This act of yours only confirms the impression I have recently been forming concerning you. I have now lost all confidence in you, and it will be utterly impossible for me henceforth to take the interest in you I have heretofore. Under such circumstances I prefer not to have you here any longer. You will, therefore, get your week's wages from the cashier and go at once."

As he left the store he swore to get even with Hal Hadley and Billy, too.

CHAPTER XIII.—Conclusion.

While the foregoing incident was happening two gentlemen were seated in the library of a handsome Fifth avenue residence.

One was George Buchanan, stock operator of Wall street, and the other was Lawyer Hooker.

"No, sir," said Mr. Hooker, "I've done all the injury to that boy I'm going to. Sixteen years ago, in consideration of the favors I had received at your hands, I was weak enough to help you kidnap that boy from his mother. Under your directions I took him to California, and placed him in charge of a respectable family in the town of Santa Clara, for I had not the heart to abandon him, a helpless child, as you wished me to. Out of the profits I got from you for my share of the dishonorable conspiracy I spent enough on the lad to bring him up as a young gentleman. Finally I decided to bring him back East and put his subsequent career up to you."

"Yes," sneered the operator, "you brought him back thinking to extort blackmail from me after all I had done for you. You were disappointed. You discovered I had a card up my sleeve which reversed the situation. I compelled you to throw the boy on his own resources without a word of explanation."

"Yes, you did. I couldn't help myself."

"And you can't help yourself now. I still hold you in my power. Defy me and you shall go to the States prison as surely as you sit there."

"I admit that if you turn the screws on me that you will win out. I am in your power."

"You confess it, eh?" chuckled the operator. "Now look here, Hooker, I have no particular wish to harm you. We have been friends, and there is no reason why we shouldn't continue such if you act reasonably, notwithstanding the fact that you did not carry out my wishes to the letter with respect to the boy. However, we'll let that pass; but he must be got out of the city. I'll modify my plans to suit your tender conscience. Send him back to California and I'll be satisfied."

"How can I explain my treatment of him when I brought him here? I'd rather let matters go as they are and not meet him."

"But that doesn't suit me. Fate has led him right to his mother and sister, and they may identify him, through some trivial occurrence, at any moment."

"Have you not been revenged enough on her. After sixteen years I should think that——"

"Never mind what you think, Hooker," said Mr. Buchanan, impatiently. "I have my own way of looking at things. That woman wounded me in the sorest spot, and I'll never voluntarily undo what my vengeance incited me to. Now then, will you do what I want?"

"I suppose I'll have to, though it goes against my grain to interfere with him, for I have ascertained that he is doing very well in this city, and is quite contented with his new lot. I doubt very much if I can persuade him to return to California with me."

"Well, it's up to you, Hooker. You know what my wishes are. See that you carry them out without any unnecessary delay," said the operator, rising, as a signal that the interview was at an end.

On their way uptown that afternoon Hal invited Billy to go to a show with him that evening.

"I'll go like a bird," grinned the boy.

The show was out about eleven, and they started to walk to their lodgings. Passing along a tony block toward Fifth avenue, they saw an aristocratic looking man come out of a fine dwelling near the corner. He started to cross the street, and his gait showed that he was a bit under the influence of liquor. A touring automobile swung suddenly around the corner and bore straight down on him.

Whether they saw the gentleman or not, no effort was made by the chauffeur to turn out of his way.

"Gee! he'll be killed!" cried Billy. "Hey, what are yer goin' to do?"

Hal had sprung forward, seized the gentleman and tried to save him. The auto swerved at the moment, and only the mud guard hit both Hal and the man. The blow, however, was sufficient to knock them a dozen feet away, where they landed in an unconscious heap. The machine went on its way at greater speed than before, and was soon out of sight.

Two gentlemen coming down the block had witnessed the whole incident. One lived in front of where the boy and the man he tried to save lay. They hastened to their aid, and with Billy's assistance Hal and the stranger were carried into the house and a doctor sent for. On his arrival he found that Hal's arm was broken, but the gentleman had suffered no material injury. An ambulance was sent for and Hal was taken to a hospital. Billy, not knowing what else to do, went to his lodging.

It was after Hal's removal that the gentleman regained consciousness, and then he explained that his name was George Buchanan, and that he lived at No. — Fifth avenue.

"What happened to me?" asked Buchanan, now quite sober.

"You were hit by an automobile," said the gentleman. "You had a narrow escape. If a young man who saw your danger hadn't jumped to your aid you probably would have been killed."

"Where is this young man?"

"Taken to the hospital with a broken arm."

Mr. Buchanan inquired the name of the hospital, and soon after felt well enough to go home. Next morning after breakfast he was driven to the hospital, and then, on asking about the in-

jured boy, was staggered to learn that his name was Harry Hadley.

He left orders that no expense be spared to make Hal comfortable and hasten his recovery, then he left for downtown. Before he had gone many blocks he turned to his chauffeur and told him to go to No. — East Twenty-second street.

When the machine stopped before the shabby house he got out and rang the bell. Mrs. Bunker came to the door.

"Mrs. Adams lives here, I believe, madam," he said.

"Yes, sir. On the top floor. I'll show you up," she said, deferentially.

Mrs. Adams answered the knock herself.

"A gentleman to see you, ma'am," said the landlady.

Mr. Buchanan came forward.

"I wish to see you on particular business, Mrs. Adams," he said, with some emotion in his voice.

"Walk in."

"Mrs. Adams," he said when seated, "I see you do not know me. I am George Buchanan."

Mrs. Adams gave a gasp and then fainted. At that moment Jessie entered the room, and seeing her mother's condition, took her in hand and revived her.

"Where is he? Where is my lost boy?" cried the mother when she recovered.

"Lying in a hospital with a broken arm which he got in saving my life."

"I must go to him at once. I must see him. Oh, my dear boy, shall I know him?"

"Don't be in a hurry, Mrs. Adams. My automobile shall take you to the hospital presently. I have a few words to say first. I will surprise you with the information that you have seen and talked with your son many times within the past three months without being aware of his identity."

"I have?" she cried, incredulously.

"Yes, ma'am. You will understand when I tell you that the boy who has been rooming with you since he came to New York from California is really your own son."

The surprise and joy of both Mrs. Adams and Jessie is beyond our power to express.

"I will send the gentleman to you, Lawyer Hooker, who helped me abduct your son, out of a motive of revenge on my part, and he will give you the boy's history from the day you lost him," went on Mr. Buchanan. As matters have turned out, the boy has been a gainer through my unfeeling act, and the son I now restore to you is one whom you may well be proud of. Now if you'll get ready I'll take you to the hospital and your daughter may go, too."

We will not dwell upon the meeting between Hal Hadley and his mother and sister. His mother and sister visited him every day, and Billy also dropped around to see how he was coming on. His employer had made kindly inquiries about him while he was under the weather, and his return to the store was the signal for general congratulations from all the employees, with whom he had established himself as a first favorite.

He found a letter awaiting him from George

Buchanan, in which that gentleman, after thanking him for saving his life, invited him to call at his house. Hal, after learning that Buchanan was the cause of his abduction, declined to call, and wrote that gentleman the reason why he did not care to meet him.

A year later the operator died, and when his will was read it was found that he had left \$100,000 to Hal Adams, once Hadley, for reasons the beneficiary would understand, and this money enabled our hero to place his mother and sister in a splendid home, which they were well fitted to grace.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE OF 1927 SETS LOW MARK

The infant mortality rate in cities of the United States during 1927 was lower than in any previous year, the American Child Health Association announced recently in its annual report, according to the Associated Press.

The rate last year was 64.9 deaths for each 1,000 births, as compared with 73.7 in 1926 and 100 in 1915, the association announced. The report covers the 683 cities in the birth registration area, embracing forty states that have satisfactory registration laws and record at least 90 percent of the births.

"The improvement in the infant death rate was almost universal over the country," said the announcement, "there being but few cities which failed to show a declining rate."

Seattle, Wash., has the lowest rate, forty-one, among the cities of more than 250,000 population. Portland Ore, and Minneapolis, Minn., were second with rates of forty-seven each. The figures for the country's ten largest cities were: New York and Cleveland, fifty-six each; St. Louis, fifty-seven; Chicago, sixty-three; Philadelphia, sixty-four; Los Angeles, sixty-seven; Detroit, seventy; Pittsburgh, seventy-two; Boston, seventy-six, and Baltimore eighty-two. Figures are based on provisional reports from the Federal Census Bureau and from state and local officials.

In the population group from 100,000 to 250,000 the best record was made by Bridgeport, Conn., with a rate of forty-three. East Orange, N. J., with a rate of twenty-six, headed the cities with populations from 50,000 to 100,000. The lowest rate of all, nine, was attained by Alameda, Calif. Of the cities of 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants Summit, N. J., was low with a rate of fifteen.



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SHORT-STOP SAM

or

The Boss of the Baseball Boys

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued)

It is hardly likely that Burton meant to do it, but he did!

He drove out a liner right in Sam's hands, and that settled the eighth inning.

Now came the last chance at the bat for Peerless.

It was Sam at the bat, too.

"I want to send out a good one this time," he thought. "I only wish the bases were filled. We must have at least one run this inning."

The Rutcliffe pitcher smiled when he saw the hero of the home nine step up.

He evidently meant to strike him out if he could.

But it took a wonderful pitcher, indeed to strike out Short-stop Sam.

"One ball!" called the umpire.

"Ball two!"

Our hero nodded to the pitcher.

"Keep it up, old man!" he exclaimed.

This must have nettled the fellow, for he sent in a swift straight one.

There was a crack like the report of a pistol as Sam's bat hit the ball.

Then perfect pandemonium reigned, and Sam knew he had surely done something.

He caught a glimpse of the ball as he swung around first.

It was just disappearing over the left field fence.

Like a race-horse he flew around the bases and scored a home run.

"Good!" cried Timlin, the tears of joy starting from his eyes. "You've done your part, Sam and I'll do mine when I get into the box. You've scored the winning run, I think, for I am going to hold them down as I haven't done before. I want to make up for the mistakes I made in the first part of the game."

"Go ahead and do your best, Frank," said Sam, with a laugh. "I rather guess that we've got them now."

Timlin hurried to the plate as his name was called.

But he struck out, just as he almost expected to.

He meant to get in his work at the box.

Jones knocked an easy one into the hands of the pitcher and did not run.

Then Bates went out on a fly to left field, and the Peerless boys had had their last inning of the game, with the score standing nine to eight in their favor.

Ketchum went to the bat first for the visitors.

He went out in a hurry on a pop-fly to pitcher.

Then Cahill came up and Timlin struck him out.

The majority of the crowd was on its feet now.

Two out and the last half of the ninth!

The game was virtually over.

But Morris stepped up, evidently possessed with the thought that while there's life there's hope.

He had a strike called on him, and at the next ball he hit out a liner over the pitcher's head.

Timlin made a jump for it, but only succeeded in turning the ball out of its course with his hand.

But it proved to be a brilliant play, for the ball landed plump into the hands of Short-stop Sam.

That ended the game.

Rutcliffe had suffered its first defeat of the season, and at the hands of boys much their junior.

But they took their defeat good-naturedly.

With the cheering ringing in his ears, Sam went to the dressing-room and changed his clothes.

When he came out he found a carriage waiting at the gate for him.

It was the handsome turnout of the mill owner.

"Sam," said Mr. Bagley, "jump in and ride around to the jeweler's with us. I stopped there this morning, and he told me your watch would be ready this afternoon. I am anxious to see it, and so are Mrs. Bagley and Lena."

Sam could not refuse the invitation, and blushing to the roots of his hair, he got into the carriage at the side of the rich mill owner.

He waved his hand to his companions of the diamond as he rode off, and they gave him a rousing cheer.

"Short-stop Sam, you are the greatest ball-player Sharpton ever saw!" the pretty Lena exclaimed.

"Don't flatter me, Miss Bagley," he answered.

"I am not; I am simply telling you the truth."

"Well, I only did my best. I got the chances and I accepted them."

It was a pleasing conversation that followed, and when they reached the jeweler's and found the watch ready Short-stop Sam was happier than ever.

When Sam undertook to leave them after they had inspected the magnificent gift he was surprised more than ever.

"You must dine with us to-night, Sam," said the mill owner. "If you have an engagement with the boys you can be back by eight. I suppose you can send word home that you will not be there to dinner."

"Yes, sir, I can do that."

He found a little fellow who was ready and willing to take the message, and then he got into the carriage again and rode off to the handsome Bagley residence.

It was the first time Sam had ever dined in such society, but he was a born gentleman, and he conducted himself in such a way that the Bagleys were pleased, as well as surprised.

It was dark when the boy set out to walk over to the club-rooms, after promising to call again and he was soon hurrying along.

When he was less than a hundred yards from the Bagley residence two men leaped over a fence and caught him in a vise-like grip!

CHAPTER XVI.

The Mill Owner Takes Up Sam's Case.

Taken completely by surprise, Short-stop Sam did not have much of a show with the two men, who had leaped upon him so suddenly.

It was as dark as a pocket under the row of trees along the fence, and this gave his assailants all the opportunity in the world to get the best of him.

But self-preservation is the first law of nature, and Sam was one of the sort of boys who always think and act quickly.

As a hand clutched his shoulder in a vise-like grip and another was thrust over his mouth, the boy struck out and upward with his clenched fist.

It was a blow that was aimed at no particular object, to be sure, but it landed in one of the best spots that it could possibly have done if it had been well gauged and timed.

Sam's fist caught one of the men directly under the heart and the result was surprising.

Down went the villain in a heap! It happened that it was the one who had covered his mouth to keep him from crying out who received the blow.

"Help! Help!" yelled the young short-stop of the Peerless nine, the moment he had the use of his tongue.

Then he made a mighty effort to free himself from the grasp of the other fellow, striking out with both fists as he did so.

"Stop that, you young hound!" exclaimed the villain. "Git up, Bob, an' help me!"

But Bob did not get up.

The man had got both hands on Sam now. One clutched him by the shoulder, and the other was around his waist and pressing hard upon his ribs.

By a desperate effort the boy slid his hand upward and caught the scoundrel by the throat.

"Let's go of me or I'll choke you!" Sam cried.

He brought his fingers together with all his might, and a gasp came from his assailant.

The boy had a very strong grip for one of his age and it told on the burly scoundrel.

The arm left the boy's waist in a twinkling and then with a mighty effort Sam tore himself away and started on a run from the spot.

At the same moment a lighted lantern showed up from the direction of the Bagley house.

There was a muttered oath and then—Whiz! A club flew past the head of the fleeing boy.

"What's the matter, young fellow?" said a voice, and then Sam had to stop to keep from running into a man who carried a lantern in one hand and a big stick in the other.

"Two men attacked me, but I got away from them," the brave young ball-player replied. "There they go! I hear them running!"

"So do I!" and with that the man with the lantern darted after the escaping rascals.

Sam ran along with him, for now that he had some one to help him, he had no fear of them.

But the boy's assailants escaped in the darkness, and after a search of ten minutes it was given up.

It was not until they started back toward the Bagley mansion that the man, who had come along in time to be of such valuable assistance to Sam, asked him who he was.

He told him, adding that he had just left the Bagley place when the men sprang over the fence and attacked him.

"Why, I am Mr. Bagley's gardener," the man said. "Come on, my boy! We must tell the boss what has happened. I was out at the greenhouse closing it for the night, when I heard your cry for help. I picked up this stick and ran across the lawn in a hurry, you can bet! I ain't of the sort to let a cry for help go unheeded."

"I thank you very much for coming so quickly," Sam answered.

As they walked up the driveway to the house the mill-owner and a man servant came hurrying to meet them.

Bagley had heard the cry for help, and had hastened to get a man to go with him to find out what it meant.

When he saw Sam and the gardener he was much surprised, but when the boy related in a few words what had happened he could scarcely believe his own ears.

"The scoundrels!" he cried. "Do you think you could recognize them, Sam?"

"No, sir, I couldn't do that. It was too dark under the trees there for me to see their faces. They were both big men, though."

"Well, I will have the wagon come around as soon as possible, and we will drive to the police station. It is too bad that you have made enemies, my boy!"

Mrs. Bagley and Lena were horrified at what had happened.

They listened in amazement to the details of the adventure the boy had just passed through.

"Haven't you any idea who might be at the bottom of this, Sam?" asked Mrs. Bagley, after she had calmed herself somewhat.

"Yes, ma'am, I have an idea," was the reply. "I have two persistent enemies that I know of, and I am satisfied that one of them would scarcely stop at anything. He is Len Marks, one of the members of our club."

"And the other, Sam?" spoke up Mr. Bagley.

"Is Jack Cuny, the president and pitcher of the Sharpton Athletics."

"Is it possible!" gasped the mother and daughter in the same breath.

"They hate me!" declared Sam. "I never did anything to them, either. True, I defended myself against the attacks they made on me, and gave them both a thrashing, but it was not my fault, I assure you. Len Marks is jealous of me because my coming into the Peerless nine placed him on the substitute list. Why Jack Cuny should form such a dislike to me I hardly know."

"Well, I will get at the root of this if it costs me a thousand dollars!" exclaimed the mill owner. "Come, Sam. Here is the wagon."

For the second time that night our hero bade good-night to Lena and her mother, assuring them that he was not the least worried over what had taken place.

The coachman drove to the town and soon halted before the station-house.

Then the mill owner and Sam went inside, and had a long talk with the sergeant.

(The continuation of this serial will appear in No. 1580 of Pluck and Luck. Out September 12.)

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NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 7, 1928

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

MILK IN THE SCHOOL

Provision of a half-pint bottle of milk for each pupil, with a fresh cup and a straw daily, has promoted milk drinking among rural pupils in Savona Union School, New York. About 95 per cent. of the pupils, from the grades through high school, regularly bring milk to school from their homes. Consumption of milk out of school hours by underweight pupils has been doubled by giving them straws for use at home.

GEN. SHERMAN'S STATUE ON 5TH AVE. REGILDED

The equestrian statue of General William Tecumseh Sherman at Fifty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue is being regilded and is now a bright red from the basic coat.

A scaffolding has been erected about the statue and a roll of roofing paper has been stuck in the girdle of the Winged Victory preceding it, in case it should rain at an inopportune moment. It will be the first time the statue has been regilded.

BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY FAIL TO END BORDER DISPUTE

The boundary conference between Bolivia and Paraguay ended recently without a solution of the half-century-old dispute. About 100 square miles at the fork of the Pilcomayo and Paraguay Rivers, containing oil lands, are involved.

Division of the disputed strip, called the Chaco Boreal, was proposed under treaties negotiated in 1879, 1887 and 1894, but none of these was ratified.

TUNNEL MEN INSULATED; ELECTRIC SHOCKS ENDED

Holland Tunnel toll collectors were insulated against static electricity recently.

Collectors at the Jersey end have been "shocked" hundreds of times a day. Investigation

showed that motor cars coming slowly down the steep hill leading to the tunnel entrance generated static electricity. When the driver would hand his toll to the collector a mutually unpleasant shock would result.

Each collector was furnished recently with a thick rubber mat to stand upon as an insulator to render him immune to shocks.

MUTE, HE REGAINS HIS VOICE IN A QUARREL WITH ATHEISTS

A heated argument over religion, in which he wrote his views opposing, two atheists, of Long Branch, N. J., brought about recovery of Thomas Perry's speech recently. In the course of the argument some one slammed a door and then Perry spoke.

Perry, which is not his real name, has been employed as a toaster in the Hollywood Hotel, Cedar Avenue, West End. Once, he said, he had been a concert singer in New York and other cities, but he lost his voice, becoming totally mute. He spent all his money consulting specialists and then was forced to seek his present job. He declines to reveal his real name, but says he will return to the concert stage.

FAKE ANTIQUES COST \$600,000; EXPERTS NOD, REPORT SHOWS

Gullible customers in search of antique furniture imported \$600,000 worth of bogus articles through the Port of New York during the last fiscal year, figures just available at the United States Appraiser's office show. Duties amounting to \$200,000 were paid by those who learned their mistake from information furnished by Government appraisers schooled in antique furniture.

Among those who fell victims to the frauds, it was stated, were several so-called "experts" who made their purchases for commercial establishments. A duty of 33 1-3 per cent. was assessed by the Government on the goods, which would have been duty free if legitimate antiques.

WOMAN JUMPER CLINGS TO BALLOON FOR TWO HOURS

For two hours Mrs. Ruby Johnson, 22-year-old parachute jumper, clung desperately through rain and mist recently to the cords of a smoke balloon that carried her eight miles before she was able to make a descent.

Just as her husband, Albert, of Toronto, and a number of persons who had followed the balloon's progress by automobile after the ascent at Roxborough, saw the big bag start to descend as the smoke gave out, Mrs. Johnson cut loose.

The balloon by that time was only 1,000 feet in the air, but the parachute opened and Mrs. Johnson landed on an estate in a suburb of Philadelphia. She was slightly dazed, but unhurt, when her husband found her. She said she had been unable to jump sooner because the ground beneath was of a character to make a landing extremely hazardous.

The ascension was made in connection with an American Legion post carnival.

A Mutual Mistake

By Kit Clyde.

"It makes no difference to me, Mabelle," said Mr. Henry Allen, with considerable spirit in his tone—more, in fact, than a young husband should indulge—"what your previous ideas and habits have been. You are my wife now, and I positively forbid it."

Mr. Allen was a New York merchant, and a young man whose prospects seemed to grow more and more brighter every day.

As a business man, he was a success, and wealth seemed to be rolling in upon him. He had been married but a few months to Mabelle Larkworthy, a beautiful girl from the rural districts of the State of New York.

Mabelle was the daughter of a wealthy farmer, and happened by chance to meet Mr. Allen, the young merchant, during the preceding winter in the city, where she was creating quite a sensation as the reigning belle of the season.

He loved Mabelle at first sight, and she, being of a good family, well educated and refined, though from the country, he proposed marriage.

He was accepted, of course, and the marriage ceremony celebrated at her father's house the following June. It was winter again, and they were in the cozy little city home. The merchant's brow was clouded, and he dashed the newspaper he had been reading somewhat rudely aside, as he gave utterance to the sentence with which we opened this sketch.

Little Mabelle opened her large brown eyes with a look of surprise and wonder. Never before had she heard her husband address her in a tone so heartless as on this occasion.

Could it be that, after all, she had been mistaken? Could it be that this man, whom she loved with all her heart and soul, was in reality a selfish, cruel monster, unworthy of the affections of a true woman?

"Henry Allen, the request from your wife is certainly worthy of some consideration," Mabelle at length said, suppressing the sob which arose in her breast.

"A reasonable one would be" he replied.

She resumed her seat and fixed her eyes on the grate. There was a perplexed look of anxiety on her face. After a moment she said:

"But I have written to my father to come."

"What, without consulting me?" he demanded, almost fiercely.

"Yes," she said, trembling.

"Then you can write to him not to come," he replied.

"That would offend him."

"I cannot help it," he cried. "You do not seem to appreciate the circumstances in which I am placed."

"I did not know you were in other than the very best circumstances," she replied, "and I had no idea that the expense would be so great."

"With the plan you have laid out there," he said, turning to a table and taking up a memorandum, "it cannot be less than three thousand dollars. Public dinners of that character cost; and as you seem so determined in these matters,

your ambitious wings had better be clipped at once."

Poor little Mabelle bowed her head in her hands and began to weep softly.

"Father and mother will be so disappointed. I have written to them, and they expect that father's birthday will be celebrated here; we always gave a dinner at home——"

"Yes, and what does a farm dinner consist of?" interrupted Mr. Allen with a sneer. "Baked potatoes and a roasted joint makes a good country dinner. You do not know what a dinner in the city is."

"But we can have a cheap one, dear," she began.

"Cheap, indeed! I've got a cheap wife, and that is enough for me," he said, rising to his feet.

Her face flushed a little under the heartless insinuation of her husband. He, not noticing it, turned again to the paper, noting with savage satisfaction the many failures since the last issue.

"Then you intend that I shall break my promise to my father?" she said.

"I certainly do intend to be master in my own house. I say nothing of the kind shall be done!"

"I thought I was to be treated as a wife, not as a slave, when I married you," she replied.

"I thought I was marrying a sensible woman when I married you," he retorted.

"I suppose you would like to go free, to associate with your old comrades again. If such is the case, you can."

"That is just as you please," he said, coldly. "You can stay in my house, but I am to rule it."

She arose with all the bitterness experienced by the conflict of love and resentment. A word, a moment's yielding on the part of either at that time would have saved untold agony.

But both were proud. He sat sullen and indifferent, a frown on his brow, and the paper in his hand. She paused once at the door and looked back at him, but the frown drove her on. She retired to her room, packed her wardrobe, and sent a servant for a cab.

The cabman came, and she had the trunk conveyed to it. She paused when outside the house to glance back once more at her husband. She would yet relent; but peeping through the lattice she saw the frown on his brow and the paper in his hand. He was still cold and cruel.

She climbed in the cab and was taken with her trunk to the depot. Within two hours after her sharp words with her husband, she was on the night train speeding away to the railroad station nearest her father's.

When Henry Allen found that his wife had deserted him, and returned to her father, his astonishment knew no bounds, grief and remorse shook his soul, and for days he was like one in a dream.

Though outwardly calm, an internal fire was consuming him. He seemed to possess extraordinary business faculties, however, and in a few weeks had steered his bark through the breakers, and once more anchored in a port of safety.

Business was better than ever for Henry Allen,

and during the summer following he amassed untold wealth.

Winter again has come. The snow lies thickly on the ground, Henry Allen, in the midst of all his prosperity, is pining for the society of one who should share it with him. Not one word has he heard from his wife since she left his home on that night. He had forbidden her name to be mentioned by the servants.

Henry is the owner of an elegant country residence up the Hudson, and only a few miles from the residence of his wife's father. Some strange fancy possessed him to pass the Christmas holidays at this country residence.

He had the house aired and repaired, and the lawn, which was a park in itself, arranged in advance for his reception.

"I do hope you'll bring the pretty little missus back with you," said the old housekeeper, as he was on the point of leaving.

Mr. Allen gave the woman a look she never forgot, and climbing into his carriage was driven away to the depot.

A week had passed. The snow lay on the ground, and the new moon shone from a cloudless sky. The wind whistled keenly among the bare branches of the trees.

It was not, however, a cold stormy night, yet one in which a fire is not unpleasant.

Mr. Allen was in the sitting-room and had a paper in his hand. His brow was clouded, though not with anger. He was endeavoring to still the gnawing at his heart.

A carriage drove up to the park gate and stopped. A woman, its solitary occupant, descended from it, and opening the gate entered. The snow on the broad, well-paved walk lay like a feathery coating, and her footsteps gave forth no sound.

"Oh, if he is only there," sobbed the woman; "if the frown is only gone from his brow, and he will forgive me for what I have done, earth will not yet be void. How shall I approach him—as a humble penitent asking his pardon? Willingly would I do it if he would only accept me again into his favor."

The woman was Mabelle Allen, the beautiful wife of the young merchant. She paused to see the carriage which had brought her, return to the village.

"If he spurns me from him," she said, "I can walk home," and she started for the house. "Oh, is he there? Does he love me as he used to, or is he grown cold by my cruelty? I never knew how I loved my husband until I gave him up. If tears and penitence can win him again he shall be mine."

Carefully she approached the front window, which was large, extending almost to the floor. How grand the old country house looked to her—grander by far than a palace, because it contained him whom she loved.

"If he will only forgive me, I will try to make him as happy in the future as he once made me." She paused, her heart fluttered, and she pressed her hand upon it to still its beating. "Oh, will he see me—will he forgive me, or will he blight my life forever?"

The light shone from the large bay window,

which indicated that the room was occupied. She approached and looked in.

At first her eyes swam so in tears that she could see no object; but eventually she wiped them away, and, calming her emotions, she gazed through the window earnestly.

She caught a sight of his clouded brow, and without groan or cry staggered back. No noise was made, and Henry Allen still resumed his reading.

She clasped her hand to her heart. Her cloak and hood were thrown aside, and she tried to move away.

Tottering a few steps, she fell insensible upon the snow.

A servant carrying a basket chanced to pass near where the insensible Mabelle lay, and by the light of the new moon saw an object in the snow.

Dropping his basket, he went near enough to see it was a human being, and then the old man turned and ran to his master's room.

"Mr. Allen, Mr. Allen!" he cried. "there is a dead woman down here in the yard on the snow."

Henry sprang to his feet.

"Where, Jerry?" he cried.

The old fellow, with distended eyes and trembling knees, led the way to where poor Mabelle lay still unconscious.

"Who is it?" said Henry Allen, stooping over the prostrate form.

Raising her in his arms he cried:

"It is, it is Mabelle, my own dear Mabelle."

Raising her in his strong arms, Henry Allen bore her to the warm sitting-room, where he applied restoratives and did all that was necessary to restore the unconscious woman.

Slowly Mabelle opened her eyes, and found a kind, loving face looking down upon her.

The cloud had gone from his brow, and though she was too weak to speak, she smiled and placed one arm around the neck of her husband. He understood her, and stooping over the couch, pressed his lips to hers.

"Forgive me, darling Mabelle, the mistake was mine."

"Let us say it was mutual," she whispered feebly.

"Anything, darling, to please you," he answered.

She closed her eyes, and an expression of happiness came over her. How sweet, after so many months of trials and sorrow, to repose once more on the manly breast of him whom she loved dearer than life.

A few weeks' illness followed, during which Mabelle's husband was her most attentive nurse.

When she recovered they returned to their city home.

Her father and mother were informed of her return to her husband's house, and cordially invited by the son-in-law to partake of his hospitality.

The cloud has now disappeared from Henry's brow, we trust, forever.

There is no happier home in all New York City than the house of Henry Allen. Yet he and his wife will never forget those days of terrible suffering brought about by their mutual mistake.

BRIEF BUT POINTED

ARMY CARRIER PIGEONS TO WHISTLE
FOR SAFETY

The War Department recently announced that army carrier pigeons are being equipped with whistles. These whistles are of light bamboo and attached to a bird's tail serve to frighten off wild hawks and trained falcons, the latter being used by some countries in wartime to attack and destroy the feathered messengers. Velocity of the wind will blow the whistles.

YOUTH KILLS HIMSELF IN RIO ZOO LION
CAGE

Because his family would not permit him to become a motion picture actor, a youth named Ferreiro Braca, of Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, climbed into a cage containing two lions at the Zoological Gardens, intent on allowing himself to be killed by the beasts. When guards hastened to the cage to rescue him he drew a revolver and killed himself.

RECORD WINTER COLD REPORTED IN
BRAZIL

Brazil is at present having the most severe winter weather ever recorded in the history of the country.

Three inches of snow have fallen in Curytiba, capital of the State of Parana, the heaviest snow-fall there in the last ten years. In the southern part of Brazil the coldest wave in history is reported. The State of Sao Paulo is particularly affected.

TWO HUNDRED FOOT JERSEY BRIDGE
FALLS, BATHERS ESCAPE

The 200-foot span of the bridge over the north branch of the Raritan River, fell into the river when its center supporting pier, made of stone, collapsed. Excessive recent rains are believed to have undermined the pier.

The old York Road, running from New York to Easton, Pa., and Philadelphia, runs over the bridge and is usually well traveled. No automobiles were in the vicinity at the time of the mishap, however. Bathers and fishermen also escaped injury.

"STOP STREET" TRIED OUT FOR
NEW YORK TRAFFIC

A yellow arrow upon which are painted the words "Stop Street" was placed recently at the southeast corner of Kenmare Street and Cleveland Place, as an experiment in handling traffic. It requires motorists to come to a full stop before turning north or south into Lafayette Street.

It will be illuminated at night with red lights. Similar signs will be placed near other main arteries if the experiment works, according to William Coleman, deputy chief inspector in charge of the traffic division. The scheme has been in successful operation in Chicago and several New Jersey cities.

ATHLETES HAVE LOW RATE OF
MORTALITY

A preliminary report of a survey of college athletes based on the lives of nearly 5,000 youths in ten representative colleges shows a slightly better mortality rate throughout the life span than the average of men taken as risks by life insurance companies.

An analysis of sports shows that the highest mortality is among baseball players. Crew men had the next. The rates of these two groups, moreover, have not improved in recent years. Track athletes follow. Football men show a consistently favorable mortality ratio. The men who played football between 1880 and 1899—all past 45 years of age—stand above the average for all athletes.

TOKIO HAS ONE STORE TO EVERY
TWENTY-EIGHT PERSONS

A phenomenon of Japanese merchandising which has often caused surprise is the large number of retail shops in Tokio. With a population of 1,995,500 and stores numbering 71,732, Tokio is thus provided with one store for every twenty-eight of its inhabitants.

Confectioneries and bakeries head the list of Tokio's stores with a total of 5,937. These are followed, in order of importance, by stores for the sale of other domestibles; for cake and soft drinks; fish and shellfish; fruit and vegetables; cereals and flour; fuel; porcelain and glass; and meat, the latter ending the list with 1,032 stores.

Most of Tokio's small establishments are operated in conjunction with living quarters, and many of them are attended to during the day by the women and children.

GEYSER IN YELLOWSTONE

Yellowstone Park has a new geyser, in point of value and magnitude believed to be one of the largest in the world. The new blower has burst out in the Fairy Creek region of the national park and approaches the size of the famous Excelsior geyser, which stopped playing in 1888.

From a crater 100 feet wide, 120 feet long and 8 feet deep the new geyser bursts forth twice each twenty-four hours and for a three-hour period throws a stream of water seventy-five feet high. Occasionally the perpendicular stream reaches a height of 100 feet and at such times loud explosions occur every ten or fifteen seconds. Many short, diagonal streams spurt out of the crater.

Existence of the geyser has been known for several days and its movements have been under observation by Drs. Arthur L. Day and Eugene T. Allen, of the Carnegie Institute, who have been doing field work in the park.

The geyser is only a short distance from the location of the old Excelsior. It has no visible water supply. During the quiet period its crater is dry and in its center appears a fissure, elliptical in shape and ranging from three to ten feet in width. Its run-off creates a stream four feet wide and eight inches deep, which runs at the rate of 120 gallons a minute.

CURRENT NEWS

LINDBERGH OFF FROM CHICAGO

Col. Charles L. Lindbergh recently arrived in Chicago from Detroit. After a light supper, Col Lindbergh re-entered his plane and took off in a southeast direction without disclosing his destination. He was accompanied by a mechanic.

THE COUNTRY STORES

The old-fashioned country store is passing—it is going to join the covered wagon, the town pump and the ox team. Thousands of these stores still keep their old estate, but in other thousands glittering showcases, ornate fixtures, gilt cash registers and steam heat have supplanted the wood stove, nail keg, cracker barrel and dry goods box handy for the whittler's blade.

ALBANIA REPORTED READY TO RETURN TO MONARCHY

An authoritative source said some time ago that Albania was about to change from a republic to a monarchy with President Amed Zogu as king. This decision was said to have been arrived at as the result of many meetings by the ministers. It was further said that Parliament had dissolved itself to make place for a constituent assembly on August 25, which will revise Article 141 of the national constitution prohibiting a change in form of government. Proclamation of a monarchy may follow after the new form of government is legalized.

8TH AVE. TUBE STATION TO BE WORLD'S LONGEST

New York will possess a single subway station nearly a quarter of a mile long when the Forty-second Street station of the new Eighth Avenue line is put into service. In announcing that the structural work had just been completed, the Eighth Avenue Association recently said this would constitute the longest rapid transit station in the world.

The individual platforms will not be a quarter of a mile long, but they are staggered, so that the distance from the southern end of one platform at Fortieth Street to the northern end of the other at Forty-fourth Street will measure 1,215 feet. There will be fifteen different entrances, as well as a connection with the present Queensboro station.

FRANCE TAKES HORSE CENSUS

In the central parts of Paris, where motor cars become more numerous year after year and it often takes longer to go from the Opera to the Madeleine in a taxicab than on foot, one might think that horses had almost disappeared in France. About the only ones seen are the few decrepit-looking animals who draw old-fashioned victorias to the tune of a taximeter.

Nevertheless, there were more horses in the country in the year 1927 than there were in 1900, when motor cars were novel and scarce. Figures recently published by the Bulletin des Halles, a

market journal, show that the horse census last year totaled 2,927,230, while in 1900 the number was 2,903,067. In 1918, on account of the war, the horse population fell to 2,232,000.

The French Army still buys many horses and large numbers are exported, notably to Canada and the Argentine. The peasants generally use horses for farm work, tractors being relatively scarce. The small size of the French farms has been an obstacle to the introduction of machinery on a large scale.

HUNDREDS FIGHT FIVE FIRES LEVELING CALIFORNIA WOODS

Aided by scores of recruits, the armies of fire fighters recently were battling fires in several sections that threatened California's forests.

Big Basin Redwood Park was in danger from flames and extra men were on the fire line. After burning two days only a single hill separated the blaze from Big Basin Park, which is between San Francisco and Santa Cruz.

A donkey engine spark started a forest fire between West Branch and Butte Creek, near Chico. Two hundred men were working on the fire line. Sparks were falling on the town of Butte Meadows, seven miles away.

Fifty men were fighting flames that threatened big trees of Big Meadows and Mercer Grove, ten miles below Yosemite. A hundred extra men were rushed from Porterville to the Weweah River fire, where 10,000 acres of brush had burned and the Sequoia National Forest was threatened.

Two hundred acres of pine timber were wiped out in a fire near Chowchilla Creek and Miami Mountain, close to North Fork in Madera County.

AMUNDSEN CAN SURVIVE ARCTIC, SAYS STEFANSSON

"If Amundsen ever reached the zone of true Arctic conditions, he is, in my opinion, safe for an indefinite period, granted that his party has even one rifle. The real danger lies in the probability that he dropped in the Atlantic Ocean between Norway and Spitzbergen."

This statement was made by the Arctic explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, on his visit recently to Camp Mystic.

"Amundsen," he said, "was not inexperienced in meeting Arctic conditions.

"Your food is likely to walk into your camp in the Arctic in the form of a Polar bear. With a rifle you can get possibly 1,500 pounds of fuel and meat with one shot. The fat of the bear serves for cooking and the meat is not only edible, but even pleasant for those used to it.

"People worry much about the cold for those at present lost in the Arctic, but the temperature there now is always above freezing. Stories we read of the flyers damaging their gums in trying to eat frozen pemmican are rank nonsense."

Mr. Stefansson spoke to a hundred or more girls passing their summer at Camp Mystic.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

— Latest Issues —

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| 1144 Billy Black, the Broker's Son; or, The Worst Boy in Wall Street. | 1170 Silent Sam of Wall Street; or, A Wonderful Run of Luck. |
| 1145 Adrift In the Sea; or, The Treasure of Lone Reef. | 1171 Always on the Move; or, The Luck of Messenger 99. |
| 1146 The Young Wall Street Jonah; or, The Boy Who Puzzled the Brokers. | 1172 Happy-Go-Lucky Jack; or, The Boy Who Fooled the Wall Street Brokers. |
| 1147 Wireless Will; or, The Success of a Young Telegraph Operator. | 1173 Learning a Trade; or, On the Road to Fortune. |
| 1148 Wall Street Jones; or, Trimming the Tricky Traders. | 1174 Buying on Margin; or, The Boy Who Won the Money. |
| 1149 Fred the Faker; or, The Success of a Young Street Merchant. | 1175 Joe Darcy's Treasure Hunt; or, The Secret of the Island Cave. |
| 1150 The Lad From 'Frisco; or, Pushing the "Big Bonanza." | 1176 A "Live" Boy; or, Quick to Get the Dollars. |
| 1151 The Lure of Gold; or, The Treasure of Coffin Rock. | 1177 A Barrel of Coin; or, The Luck of a Boy Trader. |
| 1152 Money Maker Mack; or, The Boy Who Smashed a Wall Street "Ring." | 1178 Driven to the Wall; or, The Nerve of a Wall Street Boy. |
| 1153 Missing For a Year; or, Making a Fortune in Diamonds. | 1179 Johnny the Parcel Boy; or, The Lad Who Saved the Firm. |
| 1154 Phil, the Plunger, or; A Nervy Boy's Game of Chance. | 1180 Going the Limit; or, A Big Risk For Big Money. |
| 1155 Samson, the Boy Blacksmith; or, From the Anvil to Fortune. | 1181 Up To Him; or, Running His Father's Business. |
| 1156 Bob's Big Risk; or, The Chance That Came But Once. | 1182 "Back-Number Bixby"; or, The Boy Who Was Up to the Minute. |
| 1157 Stranded in the Gold Fields; or, The Treasure of Van Dieman's Land. | 1183 A Young Barnum; or, Striking It Rich in the Show Business. |
| 1158 "Old Mystery," the Broker; or, Playing a Daring Game. | 1184 The Brotherhood of Gold; or, A Daring Wall Street Game. |
| 1159 Capital, One Dime; or, Boring His Way to Fortune. | 1185 Ed, the Express Boy; or, His Own Route to Fortune. |
| 1160 Up Against a Hot Game; or, Two College Chums in Wall Street. | 1186 The Stolen Bonds; or, How Wall Street Will Made His Mark. |
| 1161 A Big Contract; or, The Poor Boy Who Won. | 1187 A Favorite of Fate; or, After the Head Hunters' Treasure. |
| 1162 Benson's New Boy; or, Whooping up the Wall Street Market. | 1188 Master of the Market; or, The Boy Who Cornered the Stock. |
| 1163 Driven to Work; or, A Fortune From a Shoestring. | 1189 Landing on His Feet; or, The Pluckiest Boy in the World. |
| 1164 The Way to Make Money; or, Taking Chances in Wall Street. | 1190 \$50,000 From a Nickel, or, the Boy Who Was Lucky in Stocks. |
| 1165 Making His Fortune; or, The Deal of a Plucky Boy. | 1191 Born Lucky; or, From Miner to Millionaire. |
| 1166 The Stock Exchange Boys; or, The Young Speculators of Wall Street. | 1192 Hal Halman's Tip; or, Scooping the Wall Street Market. |
| 1167 Seven Bags of Gold; or, How a Plucky Boy Got Rich. | 1193 A Boy of Business; or, Hustling for the Dollars. |
| 1168 Dick, The Wall Street Waif; or, From Newsboy to Stockbroker. | 1194 Smart As They Come; or, The Boss of the Wall Street Messengers. |
| 1169 Adrift on the Orinoco; or, The Treasure of the Desert. | 1195 A Pirate's Treasure; or, The Secret of the Three Weeks. |
| | 1196 Johnny Jones & Co.; or, The Firm That Kept the Brokers Guessing. |

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